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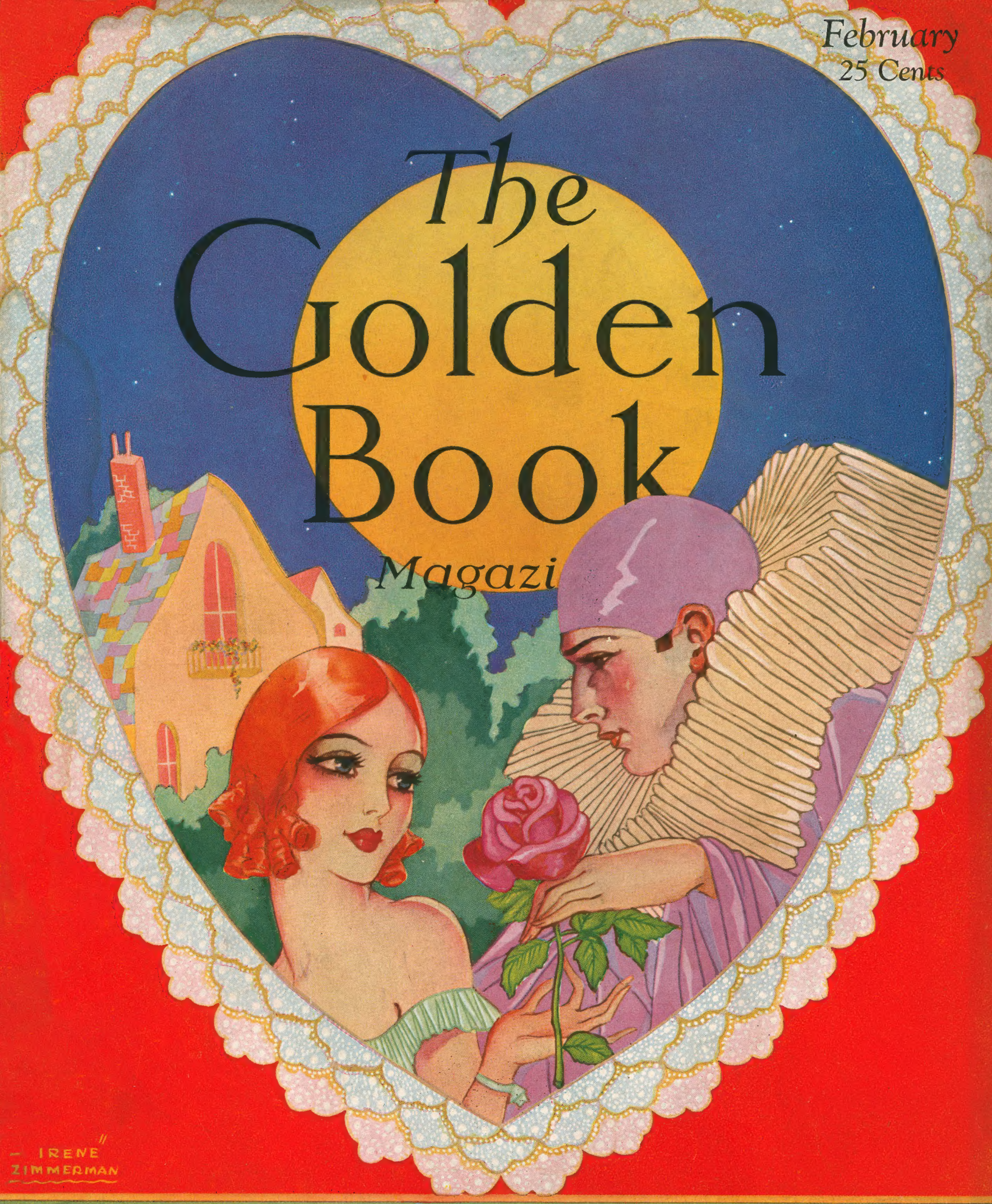
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THE
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MAGAZINE

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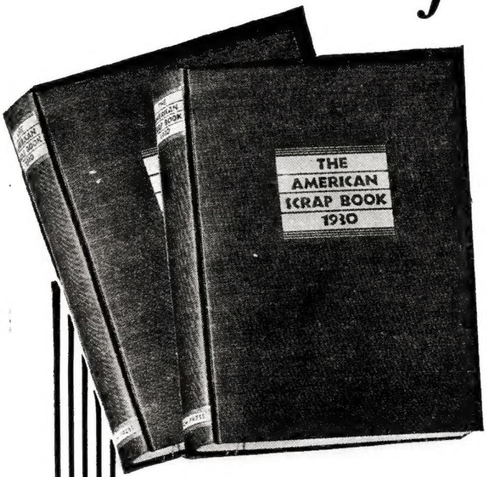

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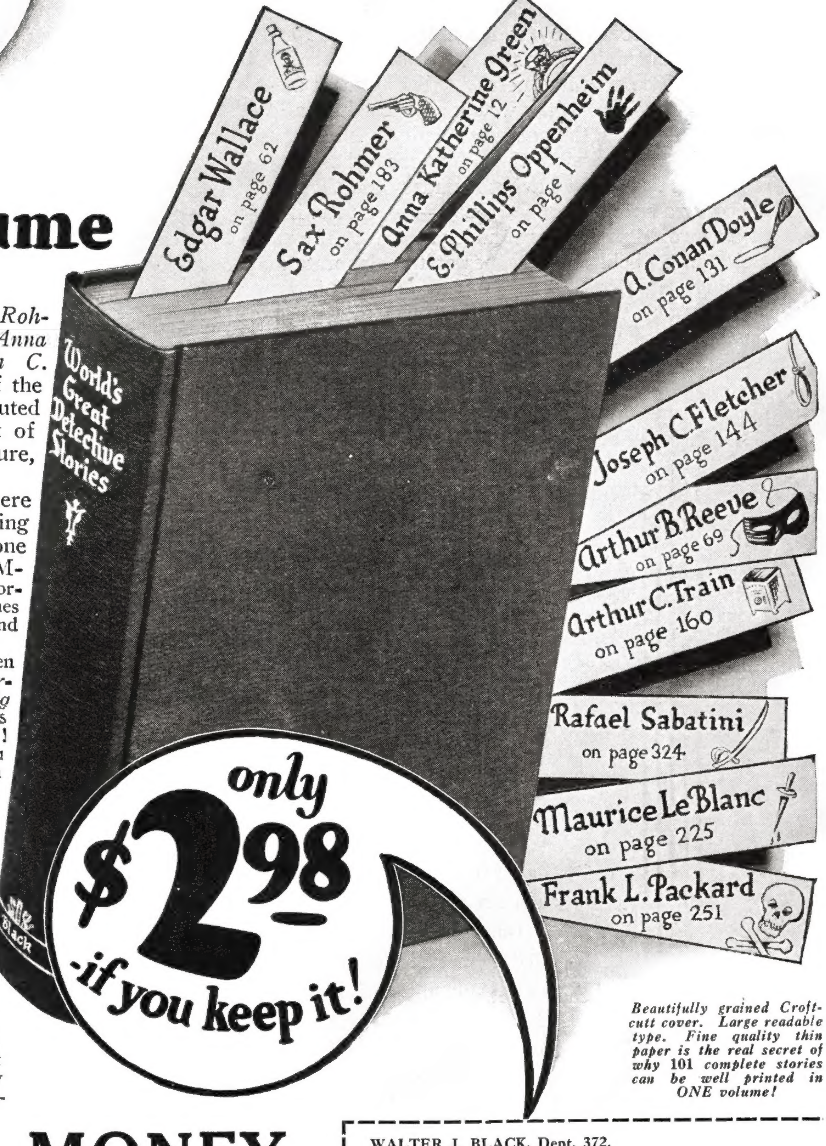
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Who's Who *in the* Golden Book

"I HAVE OFTEN THOUGHT how interesting a magazine paper might be written by an author who would—that is to say, who could—detail, step by step, the processes by which any one of his compositions attained its ultimate point of completion," Edgar Allan Poe says in an essay. "Why such a paper has never been given to the world I am much at a loss to say, but, perhaps, the auctorial vanity has had more to do with the omission than any one other cause. Most writers . . . prefer having it understood that they compose by a species of fine frenzy—an ecstatic intuition; and would positively shudder at letting the public take a peep behind the scenes at the elaborate and vacillating crudities of thought, at the true purposes seized only at the last moment, at the innumerable glimpses of idea that arrived not at the maturity of full view, at the fully matured fancies discarded in despair as unmanageable, at the cautious selections and rejections, at the painful erasures and interpolations—in a word, at the wheels and pinions, the tackle for scene-shifting, the stepladders and demon traps, the cock's feathers, the red paint and the black patches, which in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred constitute the properties of the literary *historio*."

For several months the GOLDEN BOOK has been publishing just such authors' confessions as Poe desired to see. Kathleen Norris, Wilbur Daniel Steele, Stephen French Whitman, and now Irvin S. Cobb, have each written for us the story of how he or she came to write the tale which we were publishing. Each of these stories of a story has been amazingly interesting; each of them has differed absolutely from the others. Irvin Cobb's revelations are, however, the most remarkable. We know of no other story conceived in its entirety in the way he sets forth on page 54 of this issue.

Mr. Cobb cannot convince us that too much credit for this story is due to a somnambulatory imagination. A hard apprenticeship as newspaper reporter around the New York courts went into the making of his yarn, a sure knowledge of human nature, and a sound craftsmanship that is the product of many years of always serious effort.

Mr. Cobb began his journalistic career at the age of sixteen in Paducah, Kentucky, his home town. After three years as reporter on the Paducah *Daily News* he became its managing editor, went from there to the Louisville *Evening Post,* back to Paducah, and then to New York. Reporting, comic feature writing, column-conducting, and, at last, short story and novel writing, launched him to very considerable fame. In this his personality helped: Cobb's bulky figure, his unforgettable face, his excellence as an after-dinner speaker soon made him known and loved by nearly everyone in America.

But Cobb's fame rests principally—and rightly, of course—upon the high literary merit of his best work. Certainly he is one of the first half-dozen of America's humorists, and he can also touch with equal depth the other human emotions. Romance, tragedy, terror, grim realism or delicate pathos are all within the range of his pen. "Bob" Davis of the *Sun,* Cobb's friend and biographer, writes warmly:

> In Irvin Cobb we find Mark Twain, Bret Harte, and Edgar Allan Poe at their best. . . . Not long ago a group of ten literary men—editors, critics, readers, and writers—were dining together. Discussion arose as to the comparative merits of the contemporaneous popular writers. It was decided that each man present should set down upon a slip of paper his first . . . choices in various specified but widely diversified fields of literary endeavor. . . . Admirers of Cobb's work will derive a peculiar satisfaction from the outcome. It was found that as a writer of humor he had won first place; that as an all-round reporter he had first place; that as a handler of local color in the qualified sense of a power of apt, swiftly done, journalistic description, he had first place. He also had first place as a writer of horror yarns. He won second place as a writer of darkey stories. He tied with Harry Leon Wilson for second place as a writer of light humorous fiction, Tarkington being given first place in this category. As a teller of anecdotes, he won by acclamation over all contenders.

* * *

FERENC MOLNAR, Hungary's leading playwright, is fifty years old, iron gray, with a pink, smooth-shaven face and a monocle. He finds Budapest so gay and comfortable that he will not willingly leave it even for a première of one of his plays in nearby Vienna.

Molnar is the author of many deft and ironic comedies, and such full-length plays as *Liliom, The Swan,* and *The Guardsman* have been acclaimed on Broadway. It is in such brief little skits as "Lies," however, that he achieves perhaps his greatest success.

* * *

IT IS COMMON ENOUGH for a newspaperman of today to be the author of popular novels, biographies or plays; but such a record for a journalist was unheard of when Richard Harding Davis began to write. He had begun his career as a newspaper man in Philadelphia, where he had been born in 1864; several years later he had come to New York and worked with Brisbane on the Evening *Sun.* At twenty-six, he was managing editor of *Harper's Weekly* and author of a large number of promising short stories.

Later he became famous as a war correspondent, and reported every contest from the Greco-Turkish War in 1897 to the World War, until his death in 1916.

"Joe!"

"Oh, Ethel, please let me finish this chapter!"

It happens almost every evening. No matter where we are going he will stand or sit with one shoe in his hand, his necktie half tied—or untied—and devour those last few words. . . . But I can't blame him. A movie or a waiting host—even the departure of a train—seem unimportant when one is swallowed up in the action of a story or the startling revelations of a vivid biography.

"What *are* you doing?" I'll call if he is out of sight when he should be dressing.

"Umph," is usually the first answer.

"Joe. You're *reading.*"

He gives that accusation twice as much consideration: "Um—humph."

"Put up your book; we're *late!*"

Then: "Just let me finish this chapter."

But our alibi for tardiness at parties is always sufficient excuse. "The Guild book just came and Joe had to *start* it. I was lucky to get him out of the house at all."

Joe's side of the situation is almost as dark. "Oh," he says, "blames *me* for being late. *I* was doing the reading. Well, this time, maybe. But how about *They Stooped to Folly?* And *Queen Elizabeth?* Every time I tuned in on the fights at the Garden she would say, 'Joe, please shut off that radio.' Oh, I'm not the only Guild fan in our house. We looked for *Magic Island* three days last spring—and finally found it under the cook's pillow."

The Guild Appeal Is Universal

Wherever mail can be delivered, the arrival of *the Guild Book* is THE event of the month. First, every member of the family is anxious to see what it is. Before the mailman is out of the yard, the box is open, the title-page scanned, the binding examined. And WINGS is almost as popular as the selection of the Editorial Board.

And it becomes more difficult every day to borrow a Guild book from a member. Even after everyone has read it, it isn't discarded like an ordinary book. It goes into the library for another reading later. It goes between the table book ends because it is decorative and it harmonizes with the hangings or furniture. If there are youngsters it is kept for them to read when they are old enough to enjoy it.

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One day he sent Robert Louis Stevenson an account he had written of an interview with Walt Whitman. Stevenson wrote him in reply:

"If you are to escape unhurt out of your present business you must be very careful, and you must find in your heart much constancy. The swiftly-done work of the journalist, and the cheap finish and ready-made methods to which it leads, you must try to counteract in private by writing with the most considerate slowness and on the most ambitious models. And when I say 'writing'—O, believe me, it is rewriting that I have chiefly in mind."

An English editor-writer, C. Lewis Hind, is one of those who do not believe that Davis took Stevenson's advice. He has written:

"Richard Harding Davis was not a stylist, and he had little love or reverence for the tongue that Shakespeare spoke and Milton ennobled. He just used it as a vehicle for the expression of the interest that he, a Man of Action, took in life. He liked the kind of people and things that Kipling likes, but when a headstrong critic called him the American Kipling, and another said that his story called 'Gallegher' is 'as good as anything in Bret Harte,' these gentlemen wrote nonsense."

We ourselves, however, are extremely partial to "Gallegher," and to a handful of Davis's other stories. He has done much mechanical and bad writing, but in such tales as "Gallegher," "The Bar Sinister," "A Walk Up the Avenue," and "In the Fog" (the second instalment of which appears in this issue) he tells a good swift adventure story, and tells it extraordinarily well.

We are not one of those who, by hinting at the outcome of "In the Fog," would rob the reader of his joy at the conclusion of Mr. Davis's tale; but we will say that our readers who follow him to the end have a big surprise in store for them.

THE DEBT of English literature to Geoffrey Chaucer can hardly be overestimated. Chaucer was born in London, probably in 1340, and was the son of a wine-merchant. His father was a man of substance and influence, and, following what seems to have been a common practice among prosperous merchants, he secured a place for his son in the royal household, where he served as page for a number of years, to about 1359. Little is known of the poet's life during the next decade, but he seems to have continued in the favor of the royal circle, and from 1369 to 1378 we find him on the king's service, going and coming from Italy, Flanders, and France on various delicate missions which showed the esteem in which he was held.

It is presumed that Chaucer received much of his education while in the royal entourage; and undoubtedly the young man's mental horizon widened during his trips to the far corners of Europe. On a mission to Genoa and Florence in 1372 and 1373 he met Boccaccio and perhaps Petrarch.

Chaucer's name is inextricably linked with his major work, *The Canterbury Tales;* but it is interesting to note that authorities are not in agreement that he ever made the actual pilgrimage himself to the tomb of Saint Thomas à Becket in the cathedral at Canterbury. Nor was he afraid to borrow the plots of his stories from earlier French and Italian romancers. His poetry, however, was a profoundly original achievement, with a strength and richness of imagination and imagery that has rarely been equaled by any English poet since.

"Merciless Beauty" is one of Chaucer's outstanding minor poems. In spite of the jolly animation of its subject, the roundelay proves difficult for anyone unacquainted with Chaucerian English, and we are delighted to be able to place, side by side with the original, Mr. Carr's excellent version in modern-day English.

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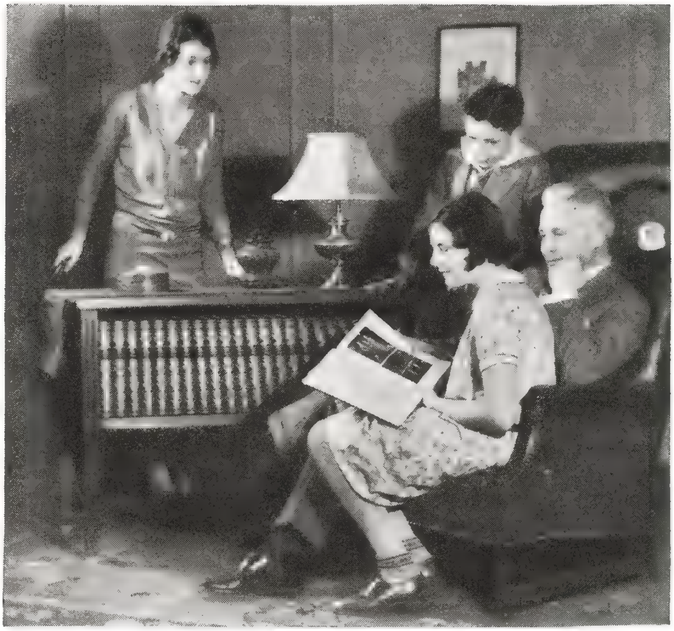

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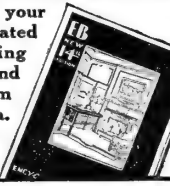

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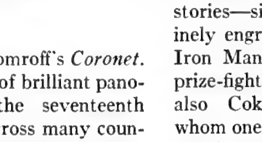
Authors and Books

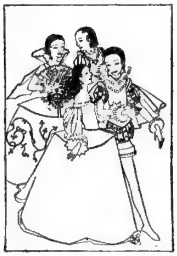
FEBRUARY IS SUPPOSED to be the reviewer's month off, what with the Christmas rush over and the spring freshets not yet begun. . . . But still books will out. . . .

F'R INSTANCE: Manuel Komroff's *Coronet.* . . . Seven hundred pages of brilliant panorama, sweeping from the seventeenth century to the present, across many countries, penetrating swiftly many persons—aristocrats, merchants, soldiers, and beautiful women—packed with evil and beauty, love and hate. . . . Mr. Komroff's theme is the downfall of the aristocracy of family, power, art, intellect, and money, symbolized by the passing of a beautiful coronet from hand to hand. . . . The first to covet the coronet—and to possess it and ruin—is a goldsmith's apprentice turned sausage-maker in seventeenth century Florence; the last is a twentieth century American girl who receives it as a wedding present from the man who marries her for her money. . . . This is a fertile book, cumulating in richness and interest with every glittering page.



"A wife should tell her husband in clear, simple language where guest towels come from."—A drawing by James Thurber from *Is Sex Necessary?* (Yes, we found it.)

COKE MASON, ex-mechanic's helper who becomes middleweight champion of the world, is the hero of W. R. Burnett's latest novel *Iron Man.* . . . As vividly as he gave us the Chicago gangsters of *Little Cæsar*, Mr. Burnett gives us Coke—lumbering and lovable, simple and dumb, dominated in everything by his love for his cheap little wife. . . . The story moves, principally by means of dialogue and simple action, against a background of hotel rooms, prize-rings, speakeasies, apartments, stage dressing-rooms, that is unbelievably real. . . . The conversation is of the variety made famous by Ernest Hemingway in "Fifty Grand," and it is as good as that. . . . Mr. Burnett has in two years written two novels that are both sociological documents of two strata of modern society, as well as human stories—simple, not profound, but genuinely engrossing and significant. . . . The Iron Man is the arch type of prize-fighter perhaps—he is also Coke, a human being whom one knows and loves. . . . Mr. Burnett is just thirty, yet he is the only American writer to have had two books chosen by book clubs—*Little Cæsar* by the Literary Guild and *Iron Man* by the Book-of-the-Month. . . . He himself has been a prize-fighter, vaudeville artist, member of a jazz band, and a state statistician. . . . His book is published by Lincoln MacVeagh (The Dial Press) and is certainly worth reading. . . .



A drawing by Pamela Bianco for Oscar Wilde's *Birthday of the Infanta.*

TWELVE AGAINST THE GODS, or the story of adventure, by William Bolitho, is itself the biggest adventure of the biographical month. . . . Mr. Bolitho has poured warm red blood into the veins of a dozen of the stock fascinators of history. . . . He has reduced their magnificent achievements and their magnificent failures to the lowest common denominator of most human souls; the passionate love of adventure. . . . These twelve most nearly realized lives of adventure in Mr. Bolitho's eyes: Alexander, whom philosophy tamed; Casanova, who went furthest into the forbidden land of women; Columbus, who proved that everything is true if you believe it; Mahomet; Lola Montez; Cagliostro; Charles XII. of Sweden; Napoleon I. and III.; Catiline, the rich young racketeer of Rome; Isadora Duncan, and Woodrow Wilson. . . . Simon and Schuster, the wise guys, published this book. . . .

MORE AND MORE the modern world is pictorial-minded. . . . It conducts its life by movies and tabloids and advertisements; it reads illustrated books and magazines and glorifies the cartoon. . . . Admirably in this modern spirit comes a two-volume *Cartoon History of Lincoln,* by Dr. Albert Shaw, with hundreds of fascinating and extraordinary contemporary Lincoln cartoons to catch the mind of the reader as it speeds past, and lead it to the sound and masterly text. . . . Dr. Shaw, editor of the REVIEW OF REVIEWS and profound Lincoln scholar, here presents Lincoln's "Path to the Presidency" and "The Year of his Election." At the time of Lincoln's election to the Presidency, Dr. Shaw points out, he was a tested politician and statesman, not the untrained rail-splitter of popular belief. . . . And a hundred cartoons are proof of this contention. . . . Altogether, what with the text giving a vivid picture of the complicated political scene of the day, even to our unscholarly mind, and the pictures with their satisfying explanatory captions almost as good as text, this is a rare book, and one for every American library. . . . And we say this in spite, not because, of the fact that the book is published by our very own firm. . . .

UTTERLY CHARMING and delicate and airy are the illustrations for Oscar Wilde's *Birthday of the Infanta* drawn by Pamela Bianco. . . . The slim, silver book is a compound of delight, for here is the ageless poetry and satire of Wilde's most perfect tale, as well as the perfect interpretation in the dozens of pictures, with their light and intricate line and clear pastel colors, of the piquant courtliness of these dressed-up Spanish children, and their subtle wistfulness. . . .

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of affection one feels for certain books long out. . . . *Gulliver's Travels* must have struck its readers that way while it was still damp from the press. . . . *The Crock of Gold* had for us immediately the flavor of an old favorite. . . . And Theodore Francis Powys' *Fables,* just published by the Viking Press, has the same indefinable quality of lasting literature, not important perhaps, but enduring. . . . These fables are full of mockery and wisdom and tolerance and nonsense. . . . The rusty pan on the rubbish heap in a corner of the garden discourses to the dishcloth on the marital bliss of Mr. and Mrs. Keddle; the corpse of Mr. Johnson, awakening for the first time in years to comfort and a mild feeling of pleasure, discusses life with the flea; Nathaniel discovers the pleasures of Darkness. . . . They are supremely ironic, based on an intellectual pessimism combined with earthy humanness. . . .

MR. POWYS' *Fables* being but thinly if delightfully disguised airings of his own philosophy, they bring us neatly enough to a book of essays which frankly make more or less pertinent comment on modern life. . . . This is Aldous Huxley's *Do What You Will* (Doubleday, Doran). . . . In the first place, Mr. Huxley writes brilliantly, fireworks of prose going off continually under cover of his artfully simple sentences. . . . Then too, the book represents a turning point in Mr. Huxley's philosophic life, as definite as the putting on of long trousers. . . . He has lost the fine edge of his desperate pessimism, and replaced it with an air of reflective calm that is not a paling, but a maturing of his personality. . . . "I have lost my fears," says he. "I can watch unmoved the departure of the last social-cultural bus—the innumerable last buses which are starting at every instant in all the world's capitals." . . . He continues to seek self-knowledge and a whole view of life in solitude and serenity of mind. . . . *Do What You Will* takes up such matters as mankind's necessary diversity of gods; the evils of the "talkies," Swift, Wordsworth, modern love, a dozen other subjects at the basis of which is always Mr. Huxley's belief in the inconsistencies of the human race. . . . It is excellent and worthwhile mental gymnastics. . . .

PLEASE DON'T LET the title scare you away from *Mothers Cry,* by Helen Grace Carlisle. . . . We did not think much of her first book, *See How They Run,* but this is a different story. . . . It is a strong, moving, utterly graphic account of the day-to-day life of Mary Knight, who marries a department-store clerk in the 'nineties, and sets up her flat with high hopes of soon replacing the linoleum in the dining-room with a rug as pretty as the green one, with big pink roses on it, in the parlor. . . . She tells her own story in a monologue which is supremely the mono-

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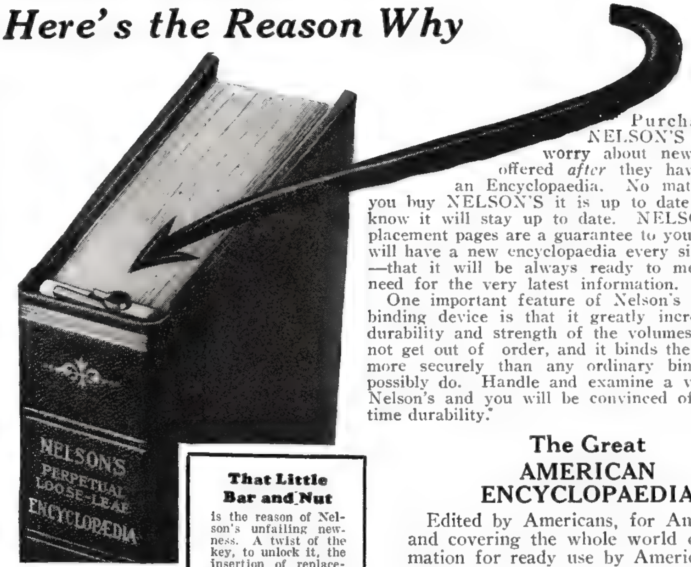

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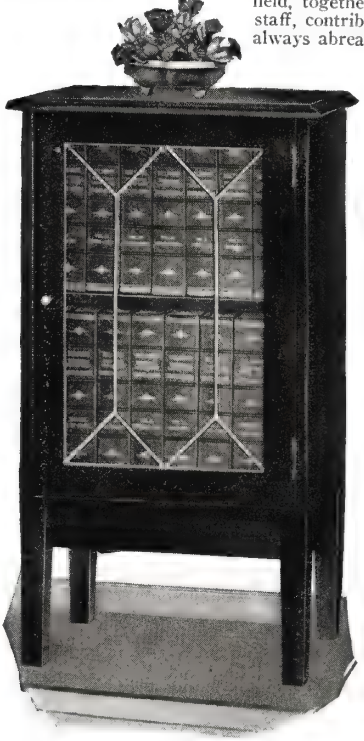

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But yesterday I picked up the book from my brother's library table and dipped into it. Happening on the dedication I read: *To the increasing army of American Investors, upon the intelligent direction and expansion of whose accumulated wealth our growing civilization depends.*

Right there I realized that this was no ordinary book on investing. I read on and found myself aboard a Transatlantic liner listening eagerly to spirited argument between a successful young business man and his conservative but more experienced uncle—representing the new and the old schools of investing.

The market break hit me about as hard as anyone else, but I'm making up a new investment plan for myself now—and thanks to Mr. Rose, it is a good deal better than my last one. He strips the mystery from investing, and reveals the methods followed so successfully by the largest investors.

Not only was Investment Management fascinating to read, but what's more, it has certainly opened my eyes to my own investment problems and the way to solve most of them. Now I've got to buy a new copy for my brother and keep his because I couldn't help marking passages as I read. It's going to be a mighty good adviser for years to come.

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logue of Mary Knight, and which is, in our opinion, the author's great achievement. . . . In Mary's own words and through her eyes we are told of the birth of her four children, the death of her husband, the struggle—in a world circumscribed through her own temperament and ignorance by the walls of her own home and the corner grocery—to bring up the four as best she can. . . . Unconscious of her contribution both towards their tragedies and their successes, she watches Danny go to the electric chair, Beatty suffers tragically at the hands of life, Artie becomes a famous architect, Jenny starts to duplicate her mother's life of sweetness and ignorance, of struggle and richness. . . .

We waxed enthusiastic a month or so ago about Oliver La Farge's *Laughing Boy,* a superb story of the Navajo Indians which was the first real novel all about Indians that we had ever read. . . . Now comes Florence McClinchey's story of an Ojibway boy, *Joe Pete* (Holt), and in some ways we like it better. . . . It is not as beautiful as *Laughing Boy,* but there is no false poetizing here—of which we do mildly accuse Mr. La Farge. . . . Joe Pete, the hero, may be almost too fine to be true, but he is also the most real and lovable little boy we have met in months. . . . This is a simple chronicle of life in the clearing in the Michigan woods. But life, when it is so stark a struggle with nature and the white man for existence, makes exciting reading. . . . The degeneration of Mabel, Joe's mother, is in itself core enough for a novel. . . .

Bearing out what we just said about pictures, Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith have issued a whole novel that is nothing but woodcuts, without even movie-like captions. . . . This is Lynd Ward's *God's Man,* the story of a young artist and a faithless woman. . . . You will not be exactly taken with the novelty of the plot, but some of the woodcuts are beautiful.

Morocco Bound is a book for those who like books about books, and it is an exceptionally nice one. . . . It is a record of Edwin Valentine Mitchell's odysseying among books, bookshops, and bookish people as proprietor of a famous shop at Hartford, Connecticut, as connoisseur and publisher. . . . Mr. Mitchell is a charming gentleman with a fund of delightful anecdotes, and the 232 pretty pages of his discourse pass quickly. . . . The last chapter, "Sense and Nonsense of Collecting," is worth the whole book. . . . Farrar and Rinehart publish it. . . .

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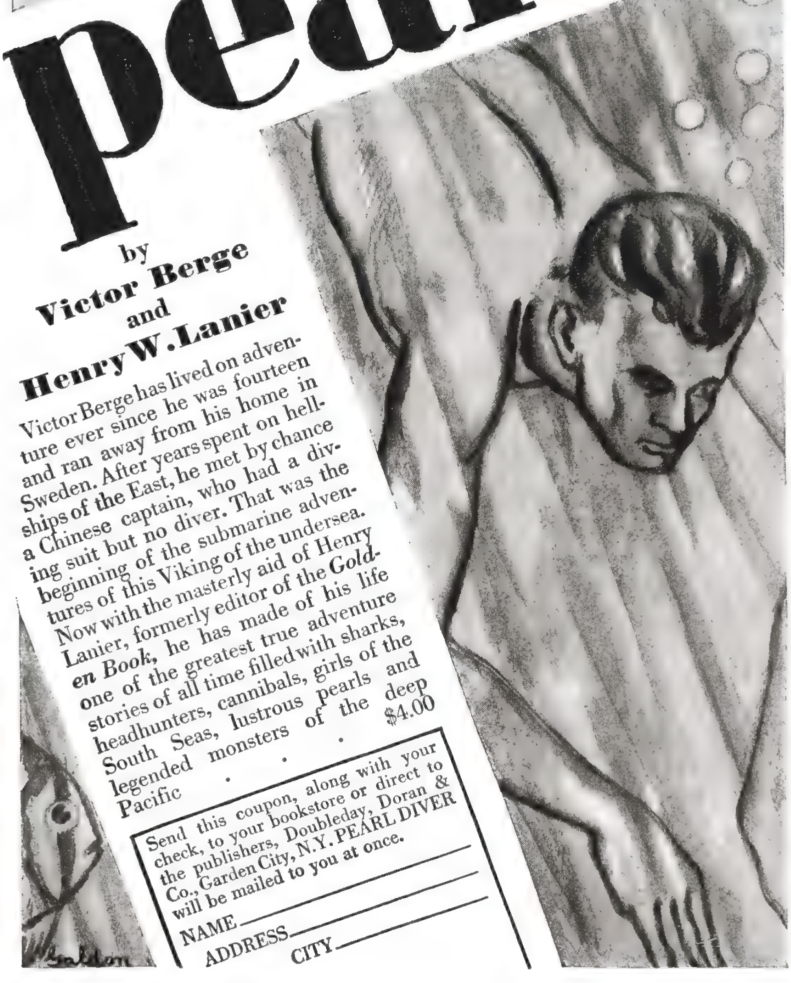

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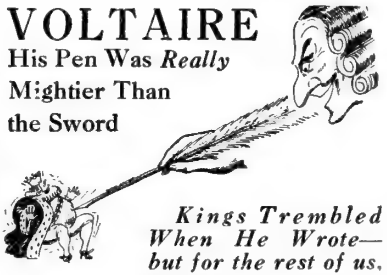

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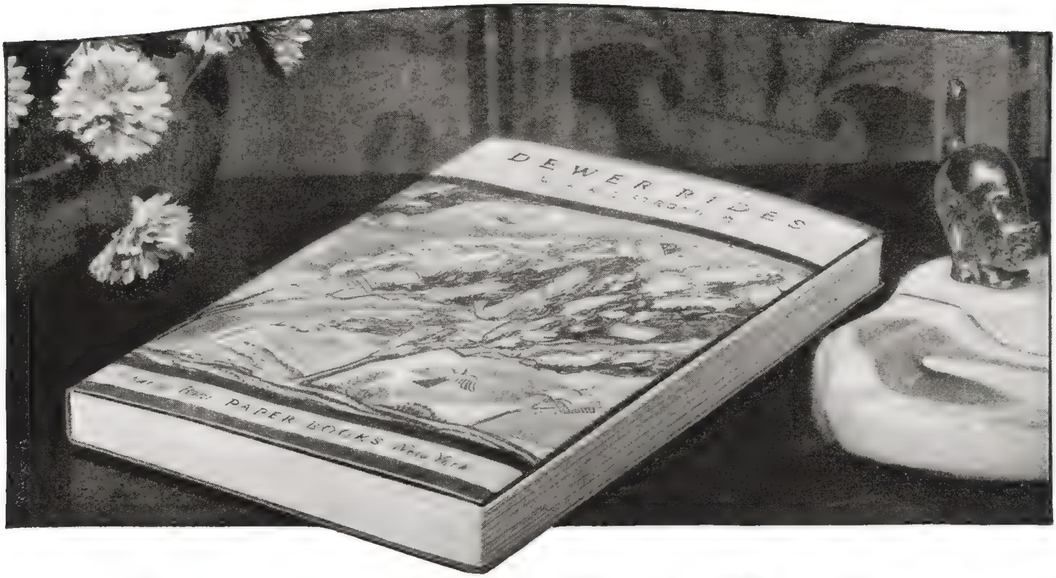

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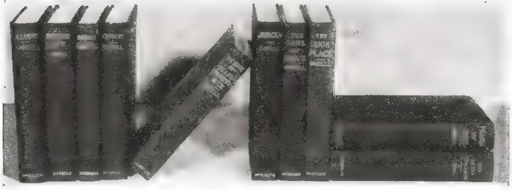

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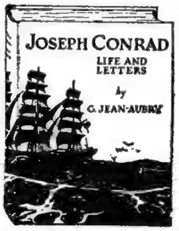

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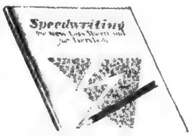

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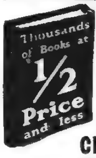

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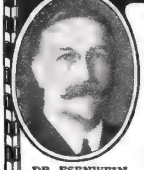

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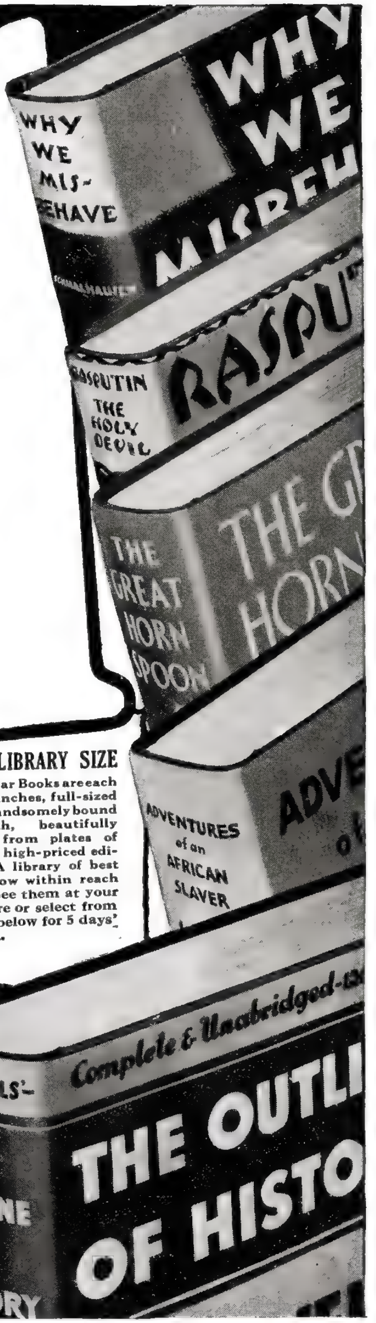

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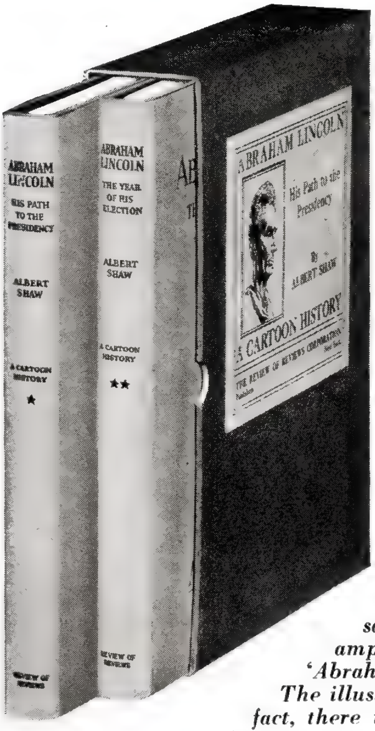

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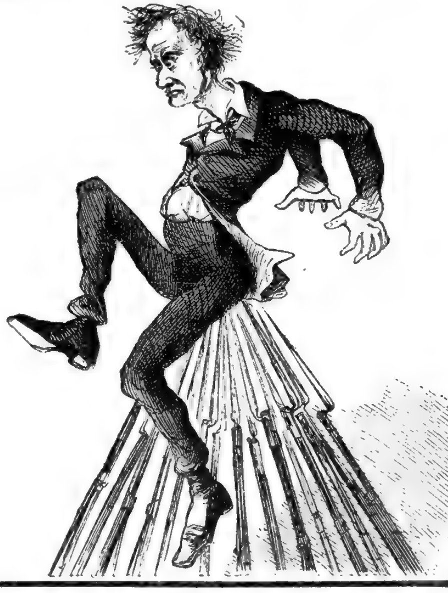

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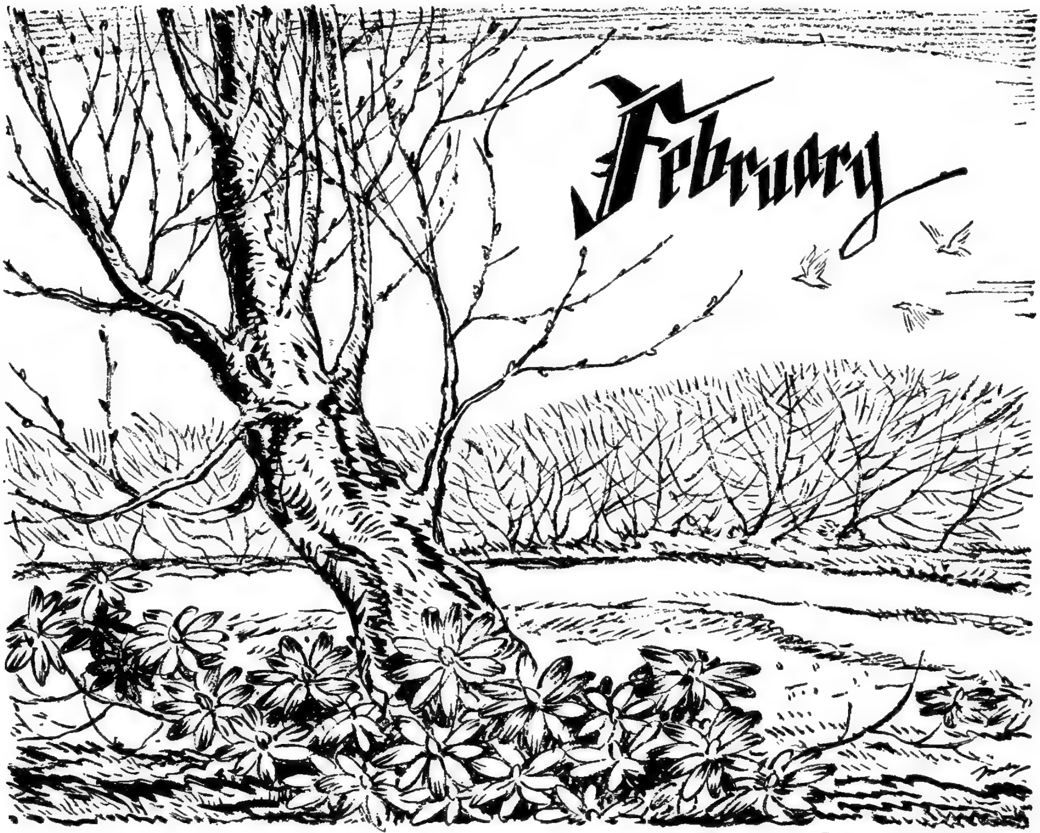


Drawing by C. B. Falls

By Maxim Gorky

Translated by S. S. Koteliansky

LITERATURE IS THE HEART OF THE WORLD, winged with all its joys and sorrows, with all the dreams and hopes of men, with their despair and wrath, with their reverence before the beauty of nature, their fears in the face of her mysteries. This heart throbs violently and eternally with the thirst of self-knowledge, as though in it all those substances and forces of nature that have created the human personality as the highest expression of their complexity and wisdom aspired to clarify the meaning and aim of life.

LITERATURE may also be called the all-seeing eye of the world, whose glance penetrates into the deepest recesses of the human spirit. A book—so simple a thing and so familiar—is, essentially, one of the great and mysterious wonders of the world. Someone quite unknown to us, sometimes speaking an incomprehensible language, hundreds of miles away, has drawn on paper various combinations of a score or so of signs, which we call letters, and when we look at them, we strangers, remote from the creator of the book, mysteriously perceive the meaning of all the words, the ideas, the feelings, the images; we admire the description of the scenes of nature, take delight in the beautiful rhythm of speech, the music of the words. Moved to tears, angry, dreaming, sometimes laughing over the motley printed sheets, we grasp the life of the spirit, akin or foreign to ourselves. The book is, perhaps, the most complicated and mightiest of all the miracles created by man on his path to the happiness and power of the future.

THERE IS no one universal literature, for there is yet no language common to all, but all literary creation, in prose and poetry, is saturated with the unity of feelings, thoughts, ideals shared by all men, with the unity of man's sacred aspiration toward the joy of the freedom of the spirit, with the unity of man's disgust at the miseries of life, the unity of his hopes of the possibility of higher forms of life, and with the universal thirst for something indefinable in word or thought, hardly to be grasped by feeling, that mysterious something to which we give the pale name of beauty, and which comes to an ever brighter and more joyous flower in the world, in our own hearts.

The Golden Book Magazine

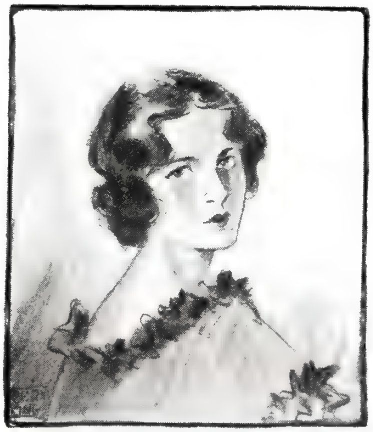
VOLUME XI
NUMBER 62

FEBRUARY
1930

*A leading British writer gaily helps
Florence to choose a husband*

The Fortune Teller

By ARNOLD BENNETT



I

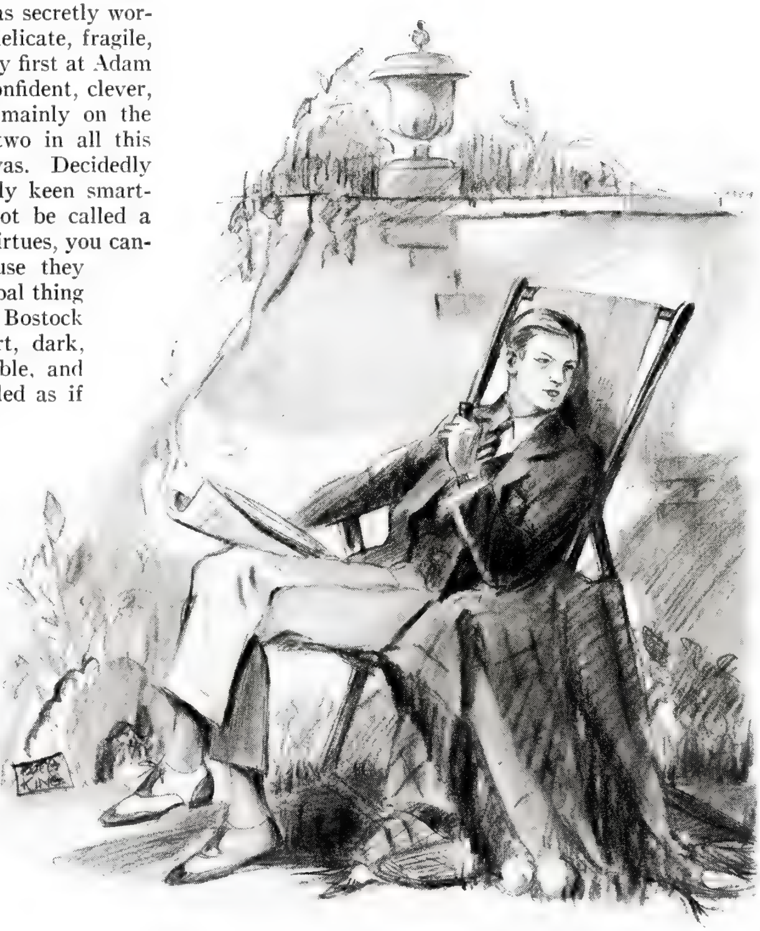
THE PROLOGUE to this somewhat dramatic history was of the simplest. The affair came to a climax, if one may speak metaphorically, in fire and sword and high passion, but it began like the month of March. Mr. Bostock (a younger brother of the senior partner in the famous firm of Bostock's, drapers at Hanbridge) was lounging about the tennis-court attached to his house at Hillport. Hillport has long been known as the fashionable suburb of Bursley, and indeed as the most aristocratic quarter strictly within the Five Towns; there certainly are richer neighborhoods not far off, but such neighborhoods cannot boast that they form part of the Five Towns—no more than Hatfield can boast that it is part of London. A man who lives in a detached house at Hillport, with a tennis-court, may be said to have succeeded in life. And Mr. Bostock had succeeded. A consulting engineer of marked talent, he had always worked extremely hard and extremely long, and thus he had arrived at luxuries. The chief of his luxuries was his daughter Florence, aged twenty-three, height five feet exactly, as pretty and as neat as a new doll, of expensive and obstinate habits.

It was Florence who was the cause of the episode, and I mention her father only to show where Florence stood in the world. She ruled her father during perhaps eleven months of the year. In the twelfth month (which was usually January—after the Christmas bills) there would be an insurrection, conducted by the father with much spirit for a time, but ultimately yielding to the forces of the government. Florence had many admirers; a pretty woman who habitually rules a rich father is bound to have many admirers. But she had two in particular: her cousin, Ralph Martin, who had been apprenticed to her father, and Adam Tellwright, a tile manufacturer at Turnhill.

These four—the father and daughter and the rivals—had been playing tennis that Saturday afternoon. Mr. Bostock, though touching on fifty, retained a youthful athleticism; he looked and talked younger than his years, and he loved the society of young people. If he wandered solitary and moody about the tennis-court now, it was because he had a great deal on his mind besides business. He had his daughter's future on his mind.

A servant with apron-strings waving like flags in the breeze came from the house with a large loaded tea-tray, and deposited it on a wicker table on the small lawn at the end of the ash court. The rivals were reclining on deck chairs close to the table; the Object of Desire, all in starched white, stood over the table and with quick delicious movements dropped sugar and poured milk into tinkling porcelain.

"By Jove!" said Tellwright. "That Balsamo johnny — the palmistry man—is coming to Hanbridge!"

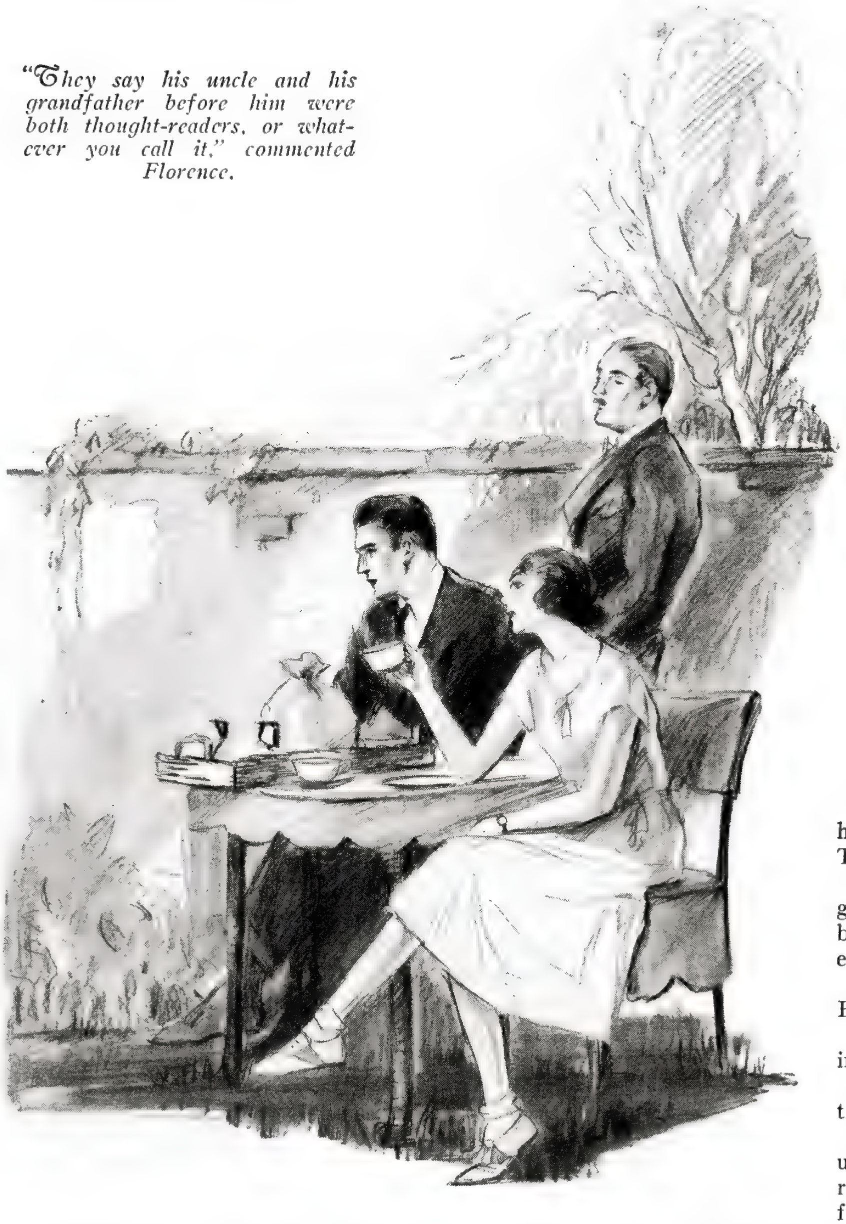


"Now, father," she called briefly, without looking up, as she seized the teapot.

He approached, gazing thoughtfully at the group. Yes, he was worried. And everyone was secretly worried. The situation was exceedingly delicate, fragile, breakable. Mr. Bostock looked uneasily first at Adam Tellwright, tall, spick and span, self-confident, clever, shining, with his indubitable virtues mainly on the outside. If ever any man of thirty-two in all this world was eligible, Adam Tellwright was. Decidedly he had a reputation for preternaturally keen smartness in trade, but in trade that cannot be called a defect; on the contrary, if a man has virtues, you cannot precisely quarrel with him because they happen to be on the outside; the principal thing is to have virtues. And then Mr. Bostock looked at Ralph Martin, heavy, short, dark, lowering, untidy, often incomprehensible, and more often rude; with virtues concealed as if they were secret shames. Ralph was capricious. At moments he showed extraordinary talent as an engineer; at others he behaved like a nincompoop. He would be rich one day; but he had a formidable temper. The principal thing in favor of Ralph Martin was that he and Florence had always been "something to each other." Indeed, of late years it had been begun to be understood that the match was "as good as arranged." It was taken for granted. Then Adam Tellwright had dropped like a bomb into the Bostock circle. He had fallen heavily and disastrously in love with the slight Florence (whom he could have crushed and eaten). At the start his case was regarded as hopeless, and Ralph Martin had scorned him. But Adam Tellwright soon caused gossip to sing a different tune, and Ralph Martin soon ceased to scorn him. Adam undoubtedly made a profound impression on Florence Bostock. He began by dazzling her, and then, as her eyes grew accustomed to the glare, he gradually showed her his good qualities. Everything that skill and tact could do Tellwright did. The same could not be said of Ralph Martin. Most people had a vague feeling that Ralph had not been treated fairly. Mr. Bostock had this feeling. Yet why? Nothing had been settled. Florence's heart was evidently still open to competition, and Adam Tellwright had a perfect right to compete. Still, most people sympathized with Ralph. But Florence did not. Young girls are like that.

Now the rivals stood about equal. No one knew how the battle would go. Adam did not know. Ralph did not know. Florence assuredly did not know. Mr. Bostock was quite certain, of a night, that Adam would win, but the next morning he was quite certain that his nephew would win.

No wonder that the tea-party, every member of it tremendously preoccupied by the great battle, was not distinguished by light and natural gaiety. Great battles cannot be talked about till they are over and the last shot fired. And it is not to be expected that people should be bright when each knows the others to be deeply preoccupied by a matter which must not even be mentioned. The tea-party was self-conscious, highly. Therefore, it ate too many cakes and chocolates, and forgot to count its cups of tea. The conversation nearly died of inanition several times, and at last it actually did die, and the quartette gazed in



"They say his uncle and his grandfather before him were both thought-readers, or whatever you call it," commented Florence.

painful silence at its corpse. Anyone who has assisted at this kind of a tea-party will appreciate the situation. Why, Adam Tellwright himself was out of countenance. To his honor, it was he who first revived the corpse. A copy of the previous evening's *Signal* was lying on an empty deck-chair. It had been out all night, and was dampish. Tellwright picked it up, having finished his tea, and threw a careless eye over it. He was determined to talk about something.

"By Jove!" he said. "That Balsamo johnny is coming to Hanbridge!"

"Yes, didn't you know?" said Florence, agreeably bent on resuscitating the corpse.

"What! The palmistry man?" asked Mr. Bostock, with a laugh.

"Yes." And Adam Tellwright read: "'Balsamo, the famous palmist and reader of the future, begs to announce that he is making a tour through the principal towns, and will visit Hanbridge on the 22nd inst., remaining three days. Balsamo has thousands of testimonials to the accuracy of his predictions, and he absolutely guarantees not only to read the past correctly, but to foretell the future. Address: 22 Machin Street, Hanbridge. 10 to 10. Appointment advisable in order to avoid delay.' There! He'll find himself in prison one day, that gentleman will!"

"It's astounding what fools people are!" observed Mr. Bostock.

"Yes, isn't it!" said Adam Tellwright.

"If he'd been a gypsy," said Ralph Martin, savagely, "the police would have had him long ago." And he spoke with such grimness that he might have been talking of Adam Tellwright.

"They say his uncle and his grandfather before him were both thought-readers, or whatever you call it," said Florence.

"Do they?" exclaimed Mr. Bostock, in a different tone.

"Oh!" exclaimed Adam, also in a different tone.

"I wonder whether that's true!" said Ralph Martin.

The rumor that Balsamo's uncle and grandfather had been readers of the past and of the future produced, of course, quite an impression on the party. But each recognized how foolish it was to allow oneself to be so impressed in such an illogical manner. And therefore all the men burst into violent depreciation of Balsamo and the gulls who consulted him. And by the time they had done with Balsamo there was very little of him. Anyhow, Adam Tellwright's discovery in the *Signal* had saved the tea-party from utter fiasco.

II

No. 22 Machin Street, Hanbridge, was next door to Bostock's vast emporium, and exactly opposite the more exclusive, but still mighty, establishment of Ephraim Brunt, the greatest draper in the Five Towns. It was, therefore, in the very heart and center of retail commerce. No self-respecting woman could buy even a sheet of pins without first going past No. 22 Machin Street. The ground-floor was a confectioner's shop, with a back room where tea and Berlin pancakes were served to the *élite* who had caught from London the fashion of drinking tea in public places. By the side of the confectioner's were an open door and a staircase, which led to the first floor and the other floors. A card hung by a cord to a nail indicated that Balsamo had pitched his moving tent for a few days on the first floor, in a suite of offices lately occupied by a solicitor. Considering that the people who visit a palmist are just as anxious to publish their doings as the people who visit a pawnbroker—and no more—it might be thought that Balsamo had ill-chosen his site. But this was not so. Balsamo, a deep student of certain sorts of human nature, was perfectly aware that, just as necessity will force a person to visit a pawnbroker, so will inherited superstition force a person to visit a palmist, no matter what the inconveniences. If he had erected a wigwam in the middle of Crown Square and people had had to decide between not seeing him at all and running the gauntlet of a crowd's jeering curiosity, he would still have had many clients.

> I SHALL WRITE *two novels for fame, two for fun, two for money; plays I shall treat in the same way, and I shall live for a time in France and marry a French girl.*"
>
> *Arnold Bennett said this when he was still a newcomer to London in his twenties. He was to do all he prophesied, and more, before he was even middle-aged.*
>
> *Enoch Arnold Bennett was born in 1867 near Hanley, the Hanbridge of this story, and one of the Five Towns which are the scene of nearly all his writings. At twenty-one he came to London to work as solicitor's clerk at six dollars a week; in ten years he had become a successful editor, novelist, dramatist, critic and connoisseur of arts. He has written two really great novels,* OLD WIVES' TALES *and* RICEYMAN STEPS*—perhaps three:* CLAYHANGER *is certainly an important member of the English novel family.*
>
> THE FORTUNE TELLER *he assuredly wrote for the fun of it—his own and the reader's.*
>
> Arnold Bennett

Of course, when you are in love you are in love. Anything may happen to you then. Most things do happen. For example, Adam Tellwright found himself ascending the stairs of No. 22 Machin Street at an early hour one morning. He was, I need not say, mounting to the third floor to give an order to the potter's modeler, who had a studio up there. Still he stopped at the first floor, knocked at a door labeled "Balsamo," hesitated, and went in. I need not say that this was only fun on his part. I need not say that he had no belief whatever in palmistry, and was not in the least superstitious. A young man was seated at a desk, a stylish young man. Adam Tellwright smiled, as one who expected the stylish young man to join in the joke. But the young man did not smile. So Adam Tellwright suddenly ceased to smile.

"Are you Mr. Balsamo?" Adam inquired.

"No. I'm his secretary."

His secretary! Strange how the fact that Balsamo was guarded by a secretary, and so stylish a secretary, affected the sagacious and hard-headed Adam!

"You wish to see him?" the secretary demanded coldly.

"I suppose I may as well," said Adam, sheepishly.

"He is disengaged, I think. But I will make sure. Kindly sit down."

Down sat Adam, playing nervously with his hat, intensely hoping that no other client would come in.

"Mr. Balsamo will see you," said the secretary, emerging through a double black portière. "The fee is a guinea."

He resumed his chair and drew toward him a book of receipt forms.

A guinea!

However, Adam paid it. The receipt form said: "Received from Mr. —— the sum of one guinea for professional assistance.—Per Balsamo, J. H. K.," and a long flourish. The words "one guinea" were written. Idle to deny that this receipt form was impressive. As Adam meekly followed "J. H. K." into the Presence, he felt exactly as if he were being ushered into a dentist's cabinet. He felt as if he had been caught in the wheels of an unstoppable machine and was in vague but serious danger.

The Presence was a bold man, with a flowing light brown mustache, blue eyes, and a vast forehead. He wore a black velvet coat, and sat at a small table on which was a small black velvet cushion. There were two doors to the rooms, each screened by double black portières, and beyond a second chair and a large transparent ball there was no other furniture.

"Better give me your hat," said the secretary, and took it from Adam, who parted from it reluctantly, as if from his last reliable friend. Then the portières swished together, and Adam was alone with Balsamo. Balsamo stared at him; did not even ask him to sit down.

"Why do you come to me? You don't believe in me," said Balsamo, curtly. "Why waste your money?"

"How can I tell whether I believe in you or not?" protested Adam Tellwright, the shrewd man of business, very lamely. "I've come to see what you can do."

Balsamo snapped his fingers.

"Sit down then," said he, "and put your hands on this cushion. No!—palms up!"

Balsamo gaped at them a long time, rubbing his chin. Then he rose, adjusted the transparent glass ball so that the light came through it onto Adam's hands, sat down again and resumed his stare.

"Do you want to know everything?" he asked.

"Yes—of course."

"Everything?"

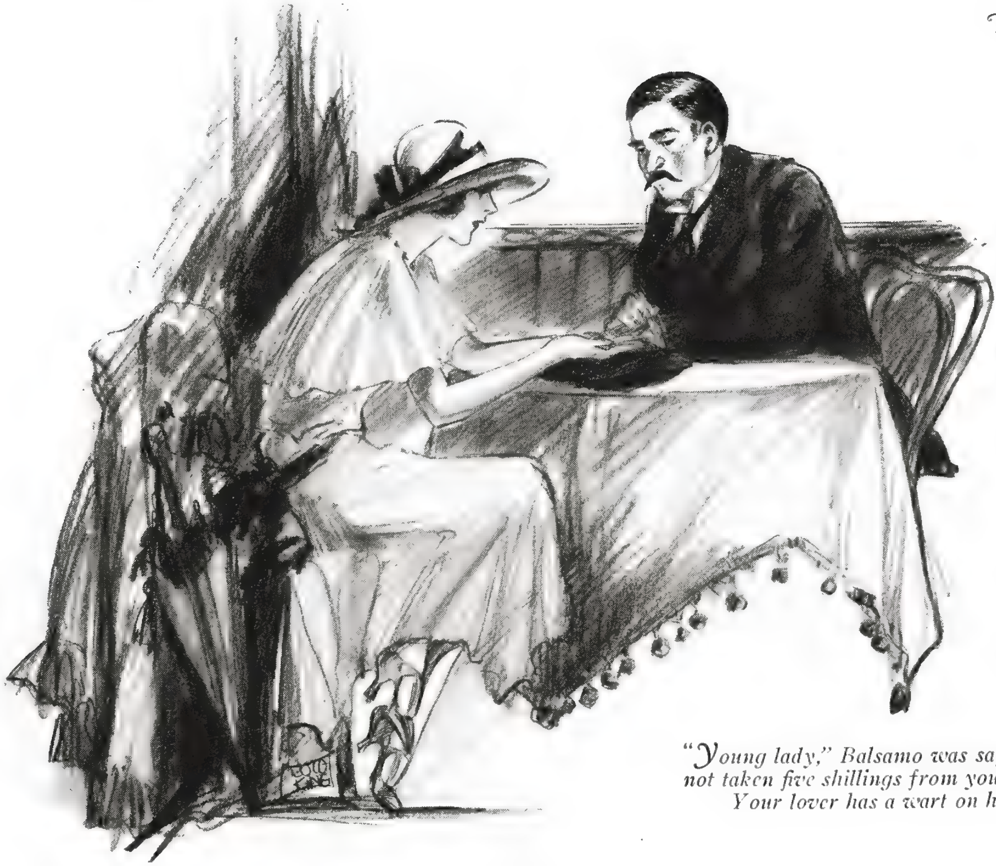
"Yes." A trace of weakness in this affirmative.

"Well, you mustn't expect to live much after fifty-two. Look at the line of life there." He spoke in such a casual, even antipathetic tone that Adam was startled.

"You've had success. You will have it continuously. But you won't live long."

"What have I to avoid?" Adam demanded.

Drawings by
Ruth King



"Young lady," Balsamo was saying, "I have not taken five shillings from you for nothing. Your lover has a wart on his chin."

"Can't avoid your fate. You asked me to tell you everything."

"Tell me about my past," said Adam, feebly, the final remnant of shrewdness in him urging him to get the true measure of Balsamo before matters grew worse.

"Your past?" Balsamo murmured. "Keep your left hand quite still, please. You aren't married. You're in business. You've never thought of marriage—till lately. It's not often I see a hand like yours. Your slate is clean. Till lately you never thought of marriage."

"How lately?"

"Who can say when the idea of marriage first came to you? You couldn't say yourself. Perhaps about three months ago. Yes—three months. I see water—you have crossed the sea. Is all this true?"

"Yes," admitted Adam.

"You're in love, of course. Did you know you have a rival?"

"Yes." Once more Adam was startled.

"Is he fair? No, he's not fair. He's dark. Isn't he?"

"Yes."

"Ah! The woman. Uncertain, uncertain. Mind you, I never undertake to foretell anything; all I guarantee is that what I do foretell will happen. Now, you will be married in a year or eighteen months." Balsamo stuck his chin out with the gesture of one who imparts grave news; then paused reflectively.

"Whom to?"

"Ah! There are two women. One fair, one dark. Which one do you prefer?"

"The dark one," Adam replied in spite of himself.

"Perhaps the fair one has not yet come into your life? No. But she will do."

"But which shall I marry?"

"Look at that line. No, here! See how indistinct and confused it is. Your destiny is not yet settled. Frankly, I cannot tell you with certainty. No one can go in advance of destiny. Ah! Young man, I sympathize with you."

"Then, really you can't tell me."

"Listen! I might help you. Yes, I might help you."

"How?"

"The others will come to me."

"What others?"

"Your rival. And the woman you love."

"And then?"

"What is not marked on your hand may be very clearly marked on theirs. Come to me again."

"How do you know they will come? They both said they would not."

"You said you would not. But you are here. Rely on me. They will come. I might do a great deal for you. Of course it will cost you more. One lives in a world of money, and I merely sell my powers."

"How much will it cost?"

"Five pounds. You are free to take it or leave it, naturally."

Adam Tellwright put his hand in his pocket.

"Have the goodness to pay my secretary," Balsamo stopped him icily.

"I beg pardon," said Adam, out of countenance.

"Of course, if they do not come the money will be returned. Now, before you go, you might tell me all you know about him, and about her. All. Omit nothing. It is not essential, but it might help me. There is a chance that it might make things clearer than they otherwise could be. The true palmist never refuses any aid."

And Adam thereupon went into an elaborate account of Florence Bostock and Ralph Martin. He left out nothing, not even that Ralph had a wart on his chin, and had once broken a leg; nor that Florence had once been nearly drowned in a swimming-bath in London.

III

It was the same afternoon.

Balsamo stared calmly at a young, dark-browed man who had entered his sanctuary with much the same air as a village bumpkin assumes when he is about to be shown the three-card trick on a racecourse. Balsamo did not even ask him to sit down.

"Why do you come to me? You don't believe in me," said Balsamo, curtly. "Why waste your half-sovereign?"

Ralph Martin, not being talkative, said nothing.

"However!" Balsamo proceeded. "Sit down, please. Let me look at your hands. Ah! yes! Do you want to know anything?"

"Yes, of course."

"Everything?"

"Certainly."

"Let me advise you, then, to give up all thoughts of that woman."

"What woman?"

"You know what woman. She is a very little woman. Once she was nearly drowned—far from here. You've loved her for a long time. You thought it was a certainty. And upon my soul you were justified in thinking so—almost! Look at that line. But it isn't a certainty. Look at that line!"

Balsamo gazed at him coldly, and Ralph Martin knew not what to do or to say. He was astounded; he was frightened; he was desolated. He perceived at once that palmistry was after all a terrible reality.

"Tell me some more," he murmured.

And so Balsamo told him a great deal more, including full details of a woman far finer than Florence Bostock, whom he was destined to meet in the following year. But Ralph Martin would have none of this new woman. Then Balsamo said suddenly:

"She is coming. I see her coming."

"Who?"

"The little woman. She is dressed in white, with a gold-and-white sunshade, and yellow gloves and boots, and she has a gold reticule in her hand. Is that she?"

Ralph Martin admitted that it was she. On the other hand, Balsamo did not admit that he had seen her an hour earlier and had made an appointment with her.

There was a quiet knock on the door. Ralph started.

"You hear," said Balsamo, quietly. "I fear you will never win her."

"You said just now positively that I shouldn't," Ralph exclaimed.

"I did not," said Balsamo. "I would like to help you. I am very sorry for you. It is not often I see a hand like yours. I might be able to help you; the destiny is not yet settled."

"I'll give you anything to help me," said Ralph.

"It will be a couple of guineas," said Balsamo.

"But what guarantee have I?" Ralph asked rudely, when he had paid the money—to Balsamo, not to the secretary. Such changes of humor were characteristic of him.

"None!" said Balsamo, with dignity, putting the sovereigns on the table. "But I am sorry for you. I will tell you what you can do. You can go behind those curtains there"—he pointed to the inner door—"and listen to all that I say."

A proposal open to moral objections! But when you are in the state that Ralph Martin was in, and have experienced what he had just experienced, your outlook upon morals is apt to be disturbed.

IV

"Young lady," Balsamo was saying, "rest assured that I have not taken five shillings from you for nothing. Your lover has a wart on his chin."

Daintiness itself sat in front of him, with her little porcelain hands lying on the black cushion. And daintiness was astonished into withdrawing those hands.

"Please keep your hands still," said Balsamo, firmly, and proceeded: "But you have another lover, older, who has recently come into your life. Fair, tall. A successful man who will always be successful. Is it not so?"

"Yes," a little voice muttered.

"You can't make up your mind between them? Answer me."

"'No."

"And you wish to learn the future. I will tell you—you will marry the fair man. That is your destiny. And you will be very happy. You will soon perceive the bad qualities of the one with the wart. He is a wicked man. I need not urge you to avoid him. You will do so."

"A bad man?"

"A bad man. You see there are two sovereigns lying here. That man has actually tried to bribe me to influence you in his favor?"

"Ralph?"

"Since you mention his Christian name, I will mention his surname. It is written here. Martin."

"He can't have—possibly——"

Balsamo strode with offended pride to the portière, and pulled it away, revealing Mr. Ralph Martin, who for the second time that afternoon knew not what to say or to do.

"I tell you——" Ralph began, as red as fire.

"Silence, sir! Let this teach you not to try to corrupt an honest professional man! Surely I had amply convinced you of my powers! Take your miserable money!" He offered the miserable money to Ralph, who stuck his hands in his pockets, whereupon Balsamo flung it violently onto the floor.

A deplorable scene followed, in which the presence of Balsamo did not prevent Florence Bostock from conveying clearly to Ralph what she thought of him. They spoke before Balsamo quite freely, as two people will discuss maladies before a doctor. Ralph departed first; then Florence. Then Balsamo gathered up the sovereigns. He had honestly earned Adam's fiver, and since Ralph had refused the two pounds——

"I have seen their hands," said Balsamo the next day to Adam Tellwright. "All is clear. In a month you will be engaged to her." "A month?"

"A month. I regret that I had a painful scene with your rival. But, of course, professional etiquette prevents me from speaking of that. Let me repeat, in a month you will be engaged to her."

This prophecy came true. Adam Tellwright, however, did not marry Florence Bostock. One evening, in a secluded corner at a dance, Ralph Martin, without warning, threw his arms angrily, brutally, instinctively round Florence's neck and kissed her. It was wrong of him. But he conquered her. Love is like that. It hides for years, and then pops out, and won't be denied. Florence's engagement to Adam was broken. She married Ralph. She knew she was marrying a strange, dark-minded man of uncertain temper, but she married him.

As for the unimpeachable Adam, he was left with nothing but the uneasy fear that he was doomed to die at fifty-two. His wife (for he got one, and a good one) soon cured him of that.

Saint Valentine's Day Long Ago

Its origin and some quaint customs as described by Pepys and others

On February 14 comes round the festival which lovers have observed and poets have honored from time immemorial. The observance is much more than sixteen hundred years old, when the Christian Valentine was beaten by clubs and beheaded, at the time of the great heathen festival of love and purification. A few years ago the observance was dying out; but it has revived, especially in London. In Norfolk the old local customs have been maintained, as will be seen from Mr. Glyde's recently published *Norfolk Garland*, a work of great value to archæologists:

> It is customary, at Norwich, for valentines to be received, not on the 14th of February, as in other districts, but on the evening of the 13th, St. Valentine's Eve. Another peculiar feature connected with this festival in Norfolk is that the valentine, instead of being an ornamental *billet-doux,* is some article of intrinsic value. The Norwich papers, for some two or three weeks prior to St. Valentine's Day, contain a number of advertisements, attracting attention to goods that are declared suitable for valentine presents. The mode of delivering these valentines is also peculiar. The parcel containing the valentine is placed on the doorstep on Valentine's Eve, and a thundering rap being given at the door, the messenger takes to his heels and is off instantly. Those in the house, knowing well enough the purpose of such announcing rap, quickly fetch in the various treasures.

This Norwich custom is, in fact, one which was formerly an universal English custom, and it is now reviving in London, as to gifts. Lady Valentines were long honored, not by anonymous verses, but by substantial gifts. Four days after Pepys had chosen Martha Batten for his valentine, he took her to the Exchange, and there, "upon a pair of embroidered, and six pair of plain white gloves, I laid out 40*s*. upon her." The question of expense troubled the diarist. When, in 1667, he took his wife for (honorary) valentine, he wrote down the fact that it would cost him 5*l*; but he consoled himself by another fact, that he must have laid out as much "if we had not been valentines." The outlay at the hands of princes and courtiers was enormous. When the Duke of York was Miss Stewart's valentine, he gave her a jewel of about 800*l*. in value; and in 1667, Lord Mandeville, being that lady's valentine, presented her with a ring worth 300*l*. The gifts of Pepys to his wife look small by the side of presents made by lovers to ladies. Pepys came to an agreement with Mrs. Pepys to be her valentine (which did not preclude others from being so) every year, "and this year," he remarks, in 1668, "it is likely to cost 4*l*. or 5*l*. in a ring for her, which she desires." In 1669 he bought more useful things for his cousin Turner, who told him she had drawn him for her valentine. Straightway he went to the New Exchange, and bought her a pair of fashionable "green silk stockings, and garters, and shoe-strings, and two pairs of jessimy gloves, all coming to about 28*s*." London shops do not now exhibit green silk stockings, but they tempt buyers with gallant intentions; and "valentine gifts" are in windows and on counters, at prices to suit a few and to terrify many.

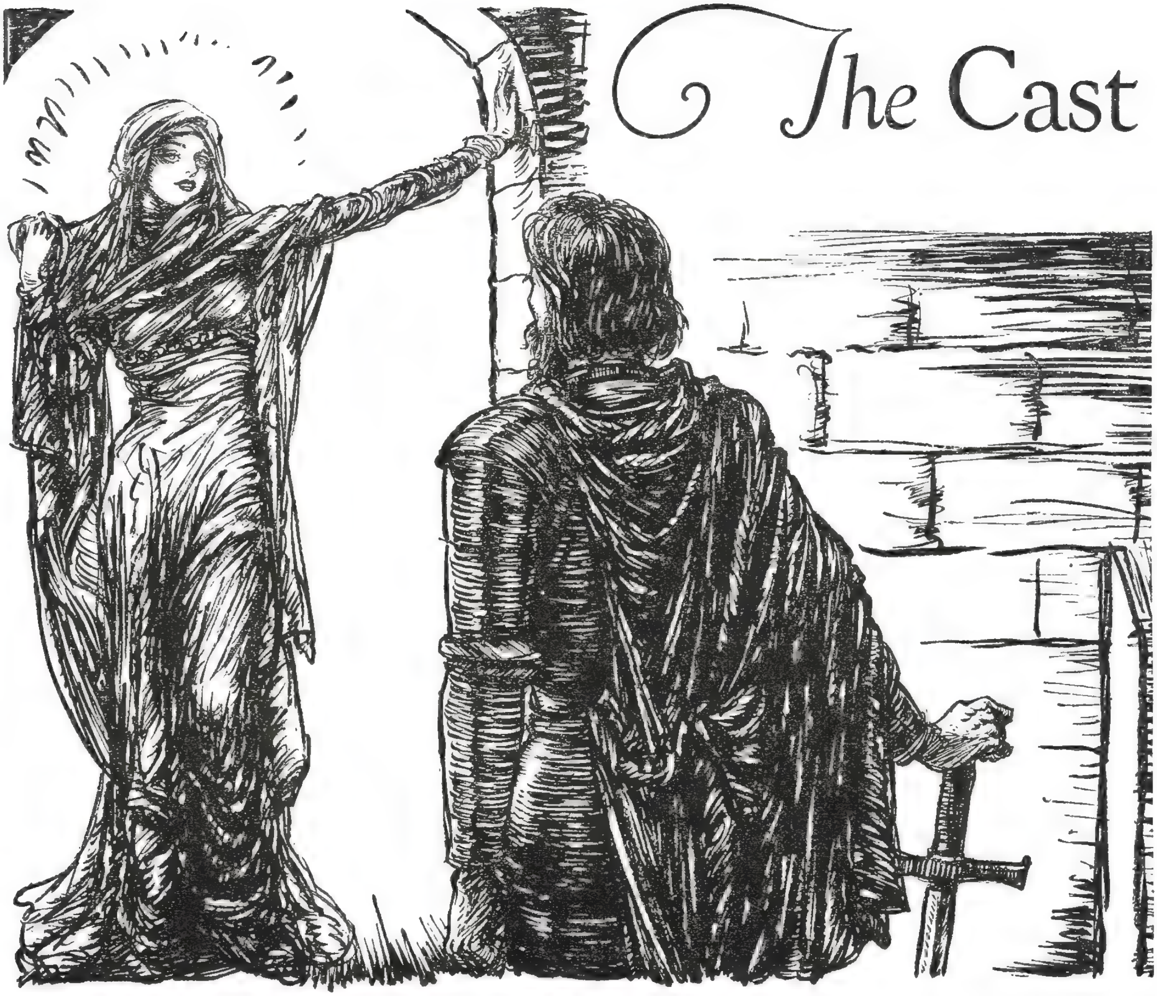
The drawing of names and name-inscriptions was remnants of old customs before the Christian era.

This does not seem to have been abolished till the time of St. Francis de Sales, who, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, as we are told in his *Life:*

> Severely forbade the custom of valentines, or giving boys in writing the names of girls to be admired and attended on by them and, to abolish it, he changed it into giving billets with the names of certain saints for them to honor and imitate in a particular manner.

Notes and Queries, 1873.

The Cast



If the old Romancers are to be faithfully believed, the ways of lovers long ago were not so diverse as you might have supposed. For however fondly they loved, whether out of measure or within it, when occasion was that faith should be tried or danger averted by means of disguise, however simple that disguise might be, one person was always deceived by it: I mean the lover. So in the tale of young Paris, loving the fair Vienne, the Dauphin's daughter of Auvergne; whom a king's son also loved. Now Paris had been banished for his presumption, and Vienne, because she would not consider the case of her royal lover, cast into prison. But it is well known how, by means of an old hen under her arm, she deceived the king's son; and how again Paris, having performed prodigies in the Holy Land, returning to Auvergne, deceived her in her turn with no more disguise than a palmer's gown and cockle.

So Flors was brought to his mistress Blancafior in a basket of greenstuff, and the Soldan of Babylon, who loved her as much as ever he did, seeing the pair asleep, lightly believed them to be sisters and was made a Christian at the first glance.

But I have a case where there was more excuse for the lover. Here he was deceived from the beginning. He loved, but knew not whom he loved; he sought, he found, but could not tell whether what he sought had been found, or what he found sought. His device, whereby at last he was made sure, is a good one. It was adopted, as no doubt you remember, by the notable Captain Ulysses on a famous occasion. This lover of mine, called Sagramor, was younger brother of Sir Belem of the Red Fell—the second of three, whereof the third and youngest was Sir Herlouin. I see him a tall, sanguine-hued young man with a pointed beard, a singing voice and generous eyes. I know he had a great heart, and am sure he was a lover by predisposition, because his name in chivalry was Le Bel Enemy. All students of this exact and elegant science will understand the import of such a name. It meant that his comeliness made Sagramor the foe of his friends, his generosity the friend of his enemies. No handsomer thing could be said of any man. It was, in fact, found too handsome by the elder, Sir Belem, who at the time this tale begins had banished his brother.

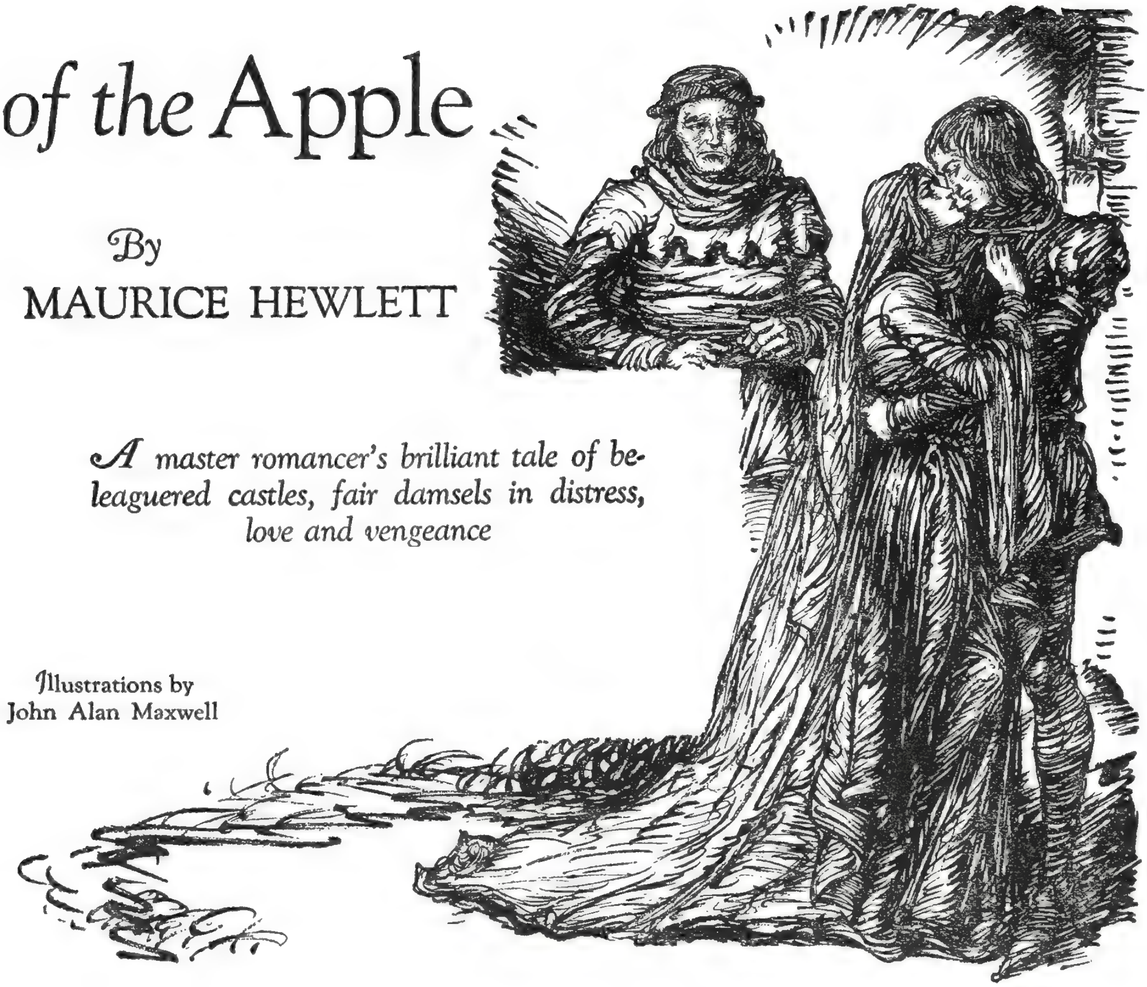
Sir Belem of the Red Fell was lord of thirty valleys

# of the Apple

By
MAURICE HEWLETT

A master romancer's brilliant tale of beleaguered castles, fair damsels in distress, love and vengeance

Illustrations by
John Alan Maxwell



in the County of Salop, with a tower at the head of each. Chirk was his, and Chirbury, and all the black lands between Rhiw and Berriew, rivers of North Wales; of Clun Forest he had as much as was good for him and more than was good for many. The king believed him a great bulwark of the Marches, and Belem was of the same mind: to that end he chose to live in his Castle of the Red Fell, whence (like an eagle from his eyrie) he could watch in fair weather the dominion of Wales, the broad plains, the rivers, forests and girdling mountains of that unsubdued plot of earth. Chiefly he could see—as he most desired—Powys, and in the midst of it the white stronghold of that grim old vavasour Sir Caradoc; I mean Sir Caradoc of the Graceless Guard, old in years, older in sin, insatiably proud, who had made the green plain a haunt of dread, and the good towns, that shone once like eyes in a fair face, pools of restless fear. Sir Belem, a tyrant in his own way, was jealous of such a tyrant as that. Round about his Graceless Guard Sir Caradoc ruled as a thief may rule thieves. "Rob me and you will be robbed," was what he said to the terretenants; and they knew very well, without dots on the i's, that he was their only stay and comfort against the English barons on the March—excellent thieves, of whom Sir Belem (I take leave to say) was one, and not the least excellent. So the men of Powys, lest a worse thing should befall them, suffered the old land-pirate Caradoc to pillage them as he would—him and his seven sons.

Seven sons he had, no fewer; and that was the litter upon which Sir Belem kept his weather-eye. They were cat-a-mountains all, a vexed brood, whose names were these:—Gaunt, and Merlyn, and Pereduc, Ros, and Garyn, and Meskyn, and young Lewknor, who proved the hardiest; handsome tall lads, black-polled, all in hue fair red and white, all thieves, all great lovers, and all but one damned. You will hardly ask me now whether Sir Caradoc's lady was alive. She was not, but had died giving birth to Lewknor de la Garde, to him and one other twin with him, a girl called Audiart. The people of Powys called her the Dark Rose, and said that no one could tell her from her brother Lewknor. In England this was held to imply that she was a termagant; but no reliance can be put upon English consideration of the matter, since she had never been seen over the March, unless indeed the tale be true that she sometimes rode out with her brothers in Lewknor's clothes.

Now, in the days when Sir Sagramor of the Red Fell first went over sea, and when Sir Herlouin was a growing lad at the Red Fell, one from the Graceless Guard (it was supposed, Pereduc) stole Sir Belem's wife Helewise, and kept her five years in Wales against all that Sir Belem could do; after which time, this Pereduc being tired of her, she was ready to die, and did die. Sir Belem said little, that not being in his way, but he did as much as he could, and pretty well. For Dame Helewise had not been dead more than a year and a day when, as he was hunting a stag, he came unawares upon three of his enemies—Gaunt, Ros, and Meskyn de la Garde—lying at random in a grove of birch trees hard by a fair stream. Gaunt was asleep, Meskyn mending a bow, Ros had his feet in the water while he sang. Sir Belem, grim and speechless, took them all three, bound their hands behind their backs, and drove them before him, like cattle at the goad's point, to the Red Fell. That which was terrible about Belem was his silence. If it had made Dame Helewise his wife glad of Pereduc, so long as he was glad of her, and even when he was not, to prefer death to her husband; if it had made Sir Sagramor take service with the Count of Hainault—judge to what length it drove these proud, chattering Welsh youths. It made Gaunt and Ros and Meskyn de la Garde first rage, then foam, then weep with raving, then swoon, and last submit like mutes—all the spirit scared out of them by a wooden English knight. Sir Belem made hinds of his prisoners: Meskyn, a mere lad, was turned afield to be crow-keeper; Ros became cowherd, and Gaunt, a very noble young man to all appearance, a plough-teamster in the marshy lands about Severn.

IMMEDIATELY NEWS of this became known Sir Caradoc levied war upon Sir Belem, and drove him to sore straits to defend all that he had. The Welshmen came up in hordes, held all the passes and threatened all the towers. It was not so much that vassals failed the Englishman as that his borders were wide. Sir Belem, who had but one single purpose, was content to wait its fulfilment; but meantime he made his youngest brother, Herlouin, a knight, and thought it well to do what I am sure he had no taste for, I mean to send a messenger oversea to summon his second brother, Sagramor, with horse and arms to help them. There was no love lost between this pair; Belem hated Sagramor as the night the day; but when a gentleman has thirty valleys to defend and a grudge to feed into the bargain, he has no time for quarreling with his brothers. And much as he hated Sagramor, badly as he had used him and badly as he meant to use him, he knew that he would come. So the devil, as they say, loves to see the cross upon a bond.

But the English roads were still waiting for Sir Sagramor le Bel Enemy while the Welshmen poured over the border. Sir Belem drew back from valley to valley, until it came to this, that he was besieged in his castle of Red Fell, and could only hold that with the demesnes about it. It was no pleasant sight for the great brooding man to see his good lands covered with Welsh pavilions; and yet he had to endure a worse. Every day Sir Caradoc de la Garde, with three of the four sons left him—one to carry his banner, one to ride on his right hand, and one to ride on his left hand—rode up the valley and was acclaimed by those he called his liegemen, haggard rogues all of them, with hoarse voices and sudden small hands. Upon his tower-top Sir Belem sat grimly, nursing his sword and his hate together, speaking never a word. So then old Sir Caradoc, his white hair blown about his fierce face, bareheaded as he always was, would ride close under the very walls and cry out, "Come down, Belem, thou dumb dog, and I will hang thee for my sons' sake." Belem, immutably patient, said never a word, and would not kill the old man yet; rather, he gloomed the more darkly, his eyes fixed always upon the brown valley where a shrunken river, brabbling among rocks, ran its journey into the heart of England. The streams fell either way from the ridge which was the Red Fell, east into England, west into Wales. From the east, and up this rocky valley Sir Sagramor must ride with his men, since no other was open. Yet a full month before he could be looked for Belem had caught Pereduc de la Garde in an ambush and hanged him up on a tall tree midmost of the Welsh pass. He did not know that he was hanging the lover of his wife; but his brother Herlouin and all his vassals knew it quite well. When next Sir Caradoc came up against him he was without a banner-bearer, but still with a mailed son on either side his horse. And this time, though he rode as before, bareheaded, courting destruction, under the outer wall of the fosse, he called out no injurious invitation to Sir Belem; but he lifted up a tight, wizened face, whereon sat desire grinning like a dog.

You may suppose that he judged his son Lewknor either too young to bear the weight of mail, or too dear to run the risk of Sir Belem, since he was content to be without a banner-bearer. That he could dock himself of so much pride had an air of fear. Venturesome old merchant that he was, he had come to a point where he dared not have all in one bottom. Two sons he had left to be esquires of his body; one should be at home in case of new sorrow. He never expected, though I hope he deserved, the sorrow that befell him when, that same night, he made a fierce attack on the castle of Red Fell, an attack of torches, smoke, haste, scrambling, and hot crying. The Welshman bridged the fosse and heaped brushwood about the inner bailey, meaning to set it alight. This fire would have served to cover scaling-ladders and murder; there would have been no sound throats in the Red Fell, had not Belem been speedier than his assailants. He himself it was who had the doors set open before they had kindled the wood, but not before the party of the castle was primed to make a rush. The Welsh, taken by surprise, were forced back upon their bridge: there and thereabouts was a hot half-hour, all done by guess-work in the dark. But Garyn de la Garde was drowned in the fosse, and Merlyn trampled beyond recognition by his own men; the rest saved themselves as they could. They drew off without their dead, not even knowing who was dead; and for two or three weeks more there was no sign made.

Sir Caradoc, as many judged, should have been broken by this tragic night which had robbed him of all his tall sons; but Belem judged otherwise, and rightly. The old Welsh robber, as proud as fire, had a bodyguard still to flaunt in Fortune's face, and for this reason, because he would demand of him the uttermost farthing, Sir Belem stayed where he was in his castle until his enemy's pride should prove his final ruin. Surely enough a day dawned, a day of level milky light, when they of the Red Fell saw Sir Caradoc come up from Powys, riding as aforetime between two mailed knights, his troop of reivers and robbers behind him; and a low chuckle from Belem—like the gloating of a kite over a meadow—made young Herlouin aware of a new turn in the game. Bright as a beam of the sun up the eastern valley came riding Sir Sagramor le Bel Enemy in gilded armor, he and his friends, homing from England's heart.

Maurice Hewlett.

"Heaven help you, gentlemen, but I know what is best for you! Leave everything to me." So Maurice Hewlett addresses the characters in his romances, who are no doubt as afraid as is the reader that Mr. Hewlett can not get them out of all the pretty predicaments into which he puts them with such unfailing grace and charm.

Readers of the Forest Lovers, Little Novels of Italy, Richard Yea-and-Nay, Earthworks in Tuscany *and other books by this beautiful story-teller know, however, that Mr. Hewlett is to be trusted. His imagination delights in the poetry and color and absurdities of the days of chivalry. He treads the mazes into which he puts his doughty knights, fair ladies and darkling villains with gaiety and ease.*

Mr. Hewlett, who died only seven years ago, was thin, energetic, intense. He knew Icelandic sagas as we do our daily newspapers, and his wife was the first woman aviator in England, owning her own airplane long before the war.

Young Herlouin looked from east to west, from west to east; and presently he spoke with a gush of pity in his voice. "Here, brother," he said, "is your enemy at his last shift, who (to maintain his estate) is forced to put under armor the tender bodies of children; and these his last, and one of them a girl. Let us show mercy, Belem, at this time. Unmask him, strip him, show him a braggart; but have you not yet had enough of his flesh? Three of his sons you have dead, and three in thrall; what worse thing can you do him than leave him alone with his memories? And as for these pretty children, what harm have they done, or what can do?"

The youth spoke urgently, not without tears; but Belem never turned his eyes from the east where Sagramor his brother showed with thirty-five spears behind him. He had his great horse appareled, armed himself from head to foot, and laid his bare sword across his knees; he did nothing more, and said not a word. Again Herlouin urged him; this time he turned his back. Then Herlouin saw that Sagramor was aware of the opposing force; he saw him turn to his companions, he saw them spur, he saw the horses plunge at the steel and quicken. It came into his mind that Belem meant to do his butchering by deputy, to serve both his hatreds at once—kill the children of his enemy and fasten upon his brother the shame of the fact. Herlouin, boy as he was, grew red in the face and swore the thing should not be.

He slipped away from the tower where Belem stood with his friends watching the game, got out of doors by a little wicket, scrambled to horseback and spurred towards Sagramor, intent upon reaching him before it was too late. This he was just able to do, but no more. The two lines were ready to engage in the open ground before the castle, drawn up in line facing each other, some two careers of a horse apart. Into the middle space came Herlouin, stooping low to his horse's neck, at a hard gallop. Sagramor saw and knew him. "Hold, brother, hold, Sagramor," cried the boy, panting; "be advised what you do!"

"Dompnedex!" says Sagramor with a high head. "Brother Herlouin, I shall do what becomes me."

"By my soul, you will not," says the other; and Sagramor:

"How then, if I punish the enemies of our house?" His eyes, very fierce, glittered between the bars of his visor. These sort of interruptions were not at all to his taste.

But Herlouin was sure of his case. "Let man meet man," he said, "and the better man prevail. But, Sagramor, make no war upon a boy and girl."

"How now?" says Sagramor; so then Herlouin told him how Sir Caradoc had lost his six grown sons, and was attended now by a boy on his right or left and a girl on his left or right, twin children of a dead mother, whose joint ages might scarcely exceed his own. He told him that one or other of the old Knight's esquires was his daughter Audiart, and one his son Lewknor; that which was which there was no telling; that as for the rest of the Welsh host, they were rapscallions, lick-pots, lackeys, varlets, dogbolts, stable-hinds, and gallows-birds of Powys, unworthy of the arms they bore or of those now offered against them, servants and panders of old Caradoc's ruining pride. He ended—"Will you draw upon children or tilt against cattle-thieves, Sagramor?" And Sagramor in a great heat swore, "By our Lady, I will not."

Sir Caradoc de la Garde began to taunt the good knight for delay, and might have forced a fray upon him but for diversion from another quarter. Out of the castle rode Sir Belem in his armor, and his vassals with him—Brian Longescu, Maynard Tregoz, Sir Bartholomew of the Spiny Brake, Sir Matthew of the Reidswire, Sir Cuthbert of the Mynd, and other gentlemen of Salop, heavily horsed and accoutered with long shields and spears at rest, as if to fight with Saracens at Roncesvalles, or brave the slaughter of Aliscans. Directly he was aware of Belem Sir Caradoc spurred out to meet him more than half-way, a bow-shot at least in advance of his men; and on either side of him those last gallant slips of his tree pushed on level, abreast, as if their hearts danced in unison. "Fight me now, Belem, thou red felon," roared the old Welsh Knight, and shook his spear. Deep in his throat spake Belem for the first time, saying, "By God, I will." And then as he made himself ready he gave the signal to Sagramor to charge the Welshmen in flank and so pen them like cattle.

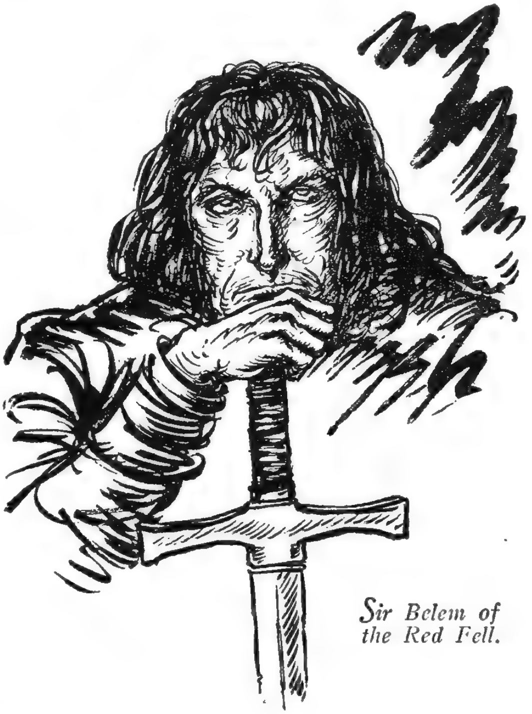
But Sagramor threw up his spear-arm in token that he must speak before he did anything. Once more the Welshman paused to hear him. Then he said, "Brother Belem, I am advised that Sir Caradoc has brought out his two children—all that he has left—in armor, and that one of these is a young virgin. They tell me that the rest of his following are villeins pranked in the mail of good knights. If these reports be true you know better than to call me on. If they be not true, let Sir Caradoc deny. But I believe they are true, and therefore I will do one of two things: I will meet Sir Caradoc himself (as his due is) in single combat, on horse and on foot, and give a good account of myself, as I hope; or let him stand aside with his imps, so unarmed, with a flail in my hand I will pound this rascaille as it deserves. But, Belem, you shall not require me to go a-tilt against hinds, nor do battle with a young boy. There were metter customs in England before I left it."

Sir Belem, who saw his plan spoiled, was furious. "Is this your custom of oversea? Is this your loyalty? I spit upon you, recreant." So he said; then to his followers, "Pass avant! Follow Belem!" The whole long line of his men set spears in rest and drove in the sharp spurs. Old Sir Caradoc turned in his saddle to give warning to his host; but Sagramor, seeing that he and his two squires must be swept up and devoured by Belem before any support could reach them, Sagramor, I say, uttered a sharp cry. "*Dieu nous garde!* This is massacre, not war. On my side, Herlouin," he said, "follow, follow close!" He cantered out in advance of his company, they pressing after in due order, with intent to interpose his force between Belem and his prey; and this would have been done if Sir Caradoc, hungry and thirsty for death, had not rushed in to meet it. But so it fell out that the three companies met in the midst with a thudding shock, and that Belem was on terms with the father of his thief before anyone could comfort him. At the first onset Belem sent the old knight headlong to ground, thrust through the gorget with a spear. He pinned him to the earth and left the spear sticking there; then drawing sword he would have gone on to yet more dreadful slaking of his dry heat. Seeing which, Sagramor with a mace clove a way for himself through the vassals of his house, once his friends, intent to defend from their fury those who had done them the first wrong. "Put up, Belem, put up!" he shouted in a high voice as he wrought; "do those innocents no harm, or by Heaven I shall repay it on thee!" So he said, and smote right and left, trying by all means to get at his brother. Close behind him pressed Herlouin. But they saw the two armed children side by side engage the man who had overthrown their father, and knew that it must end as it must.

Sir Belem played with their wild sallies as a great cat may handle a mouse, when she is full of idleness as well as vice. Temptingly he opened guard once or twice, whereupon they, with the mad spirit of their father surging in them, came on furiously and at random. So presently, with a light flicker of his blade, Belem cut at one of them and shore through the plates of the neckpiece, so that the helm was loosened and fell off sideways. They saw him falter at that, even with his sword shivering in mid-air ready to strike. It would seem that shame smote even him when out of the ungainly trunk of steel, to look upon the ruin and raving, the dust, the clamor and the blood, there beamed forth the smooth pale face, the wide eyes, the rippling dark hair of a grave young girl. Hither and thither drove the press of battle, swirling like a whirlpool in the tide, while Belem sat gaping at his deed.

Spurring at last came Sagramor to the place. He swung his mace about his head, struck downwards, and splintered the sword of Belem his brother. "Oh, shame to our father's blood!" he cried with trembling voice. "What has thou done, Belem?" He looked at the girl, she steadily at him; he hung his head, he sat adroop, thoughtful on his horse. But Belem, recovering himself, quick to the advantage, snatched at the spear which, transfixing old Caradoc's throat, still swayed like a pole in the tideway; with a wrench he pulled it out, then aimed a buffet sideways at Sagramor—a foul blow. Over against him that other armed child of the Graceless Guard got between him and the girl; but Belem was now intent upon his brother, pressing him with his shield and short sword so as by any means to have his life. Herlouin took his chance to get the girl out of the mess, pressed forward and confronted her and her armed brother. Backward like the long wash of a wave came the battle, and swept him, the boy, and the maid, into the main stream of strife.

As they drifted hurtling together, young Herlouin, for honest ends, lifted sword and voice above the din. "My prize, my capture!" he cried as he strove to disarm the Welsh boy. But at the words Lewknor de la Garde threw himself forward upon him: Herlouin felt his hands at his shoulders, heard him grunt as he tussled and tried for mastery. "Never your capture, English wolf!" he said between his teeth, whimpering and fretting at his lack of strength. "Let loose, little fool," says Herlouin; "I am doing what I can for you"; but to no purpose. Either he was past the sense of the ears or the lust of murder was upon him; possessed at least by some devil he slipped from his horse and clung with his full weight upon Herlouin's neck, endangering both their lives. Seeing which a friend and vassal of the Red Fell—Maynard Tregoz by name, a valiant knight of Salop—let drive at Lewknor with his axe, and hitting him fairly on the top of the head, split his helm clean in the middle, so that the two halves fell apart. The hands parted from Herlouin's neck; Herlouin was free. A universal cry went up on all sides: here on the ground before them was another girl in all points like the first: the round smooth face, the pouting rich mouth, curling hair, fringed eyes; and over all rage and awe, shame and high blood, clouding, flushing, paling, leaping, dying, like a mountain fire. Herlouin, looking dreadfully upon the sight, crossed himself. Was this the girl and t'other the boy? Had he, all unknowing, wrestled with a virgin? Were both of them girls? If so, had a girl so nearly had him down? God knew, in a generous youth this was no time for nice considerations. Here, it did seem, were two girls in a man's affair. They must be got out. "Man or maid," says Herlouin, "I fight you no more. Trust me, and help me get your sister out of this." He spoke as he hoped, not as he knew; and first his enemy looked at him with a hint of fight left in two hot, gray eyes. But then, "Get her away," he said, and Herlouin thanked his Saviour for knowledge. By labor and heat, by hard knocks not a few, by shouting himself hoarse, by prayers, entreaties, and his horse's rump, he got a way made for them out of the battle. Side by side they came out, and side by side rode off down the valley into Powys; and it was pretty (where so much was grim) to see the care each had for the other. But for the life of him Herlouin could not tell—when their backs were turned—which of them it was had called the other "Sister." Certainly, a more beautiful pair, or a pair which made franker coparcenary—whereby the girl took boyish looks and the boy girlish—he had never hoped to see.



Sir Belem of the Red Fell.

To consider now the fortunes of battle: no living Welshmen except Lewknor and his twin sister left the ground. Most were slain, the rest bound prisoners; yet in the midst of swords sheathed or sheathing, the two brothers of the Red Fell fought like tigers, Belem to have Sagramor's life, Sagramor to disarm Belem.

So by the grace of God he did. Belem lies on the ground, Sagramor, spent and breathing deep, leans on his mace looking at him.

"Belem," says this good knight, "you have sought to take my life."

"By the fiend," says Belem, "and I will have it yet."

"I think not," Sagramor replies; "but let that be. So long as I remain on life you will do no more injury to the Graceless Guard. For the evil deed of one man there six men have paid the price. As I see the matter, it is now time for you to reflect that you are a Christian, upon whom forgiveness of sins is by God's counsel enjoined. Let a love-day be proclaimed, establish a peace, and I spare your life, otherwise—I have you disarmed below me. Choose what you will do." What choice was there? Belem gave Sagramor his word, intending to break it, and Sagramor gave Belem his life. He let him go free, him and his men; but himself would not enter his father's house.

This troubled Herlouin, the youngest of the three brothers. "What will you do now, Sagramor?" he asks.

"Brother," said Sagramor, "I shall go to pray, hoping thereby to rid my soul of all earthly stain, so that a clean, sweet chamber may be prepared within me."

"But who shall be guest to sit in this chamber?" asks Herlouin; and Sagramor told him, "the most lovely lady now in the world."

"And who is your lovely lady, Sagramor?"

He said, "My lady Audiart of the Graceless Guard is the lady—in whose face Awe sits still, and Grief, and Holy Fear."

"Aha," cries Herlouin, "then you saw what Belem and I saw: the young girl in the midst of battle."

"Brother, I did," said Sagramor; and Herlouin said, "I saw, as it might be, two such girls."

Sagramor said, "So did I, God help me." Then Herlouin kissed him, saying, "May He be with thee, Sagramor my brother, and give thee thy fond desire." So the brothers parted, Sagramor rode away alone towards Powys, yet not across the border; but stayed rather at the heritage of the Ford, and there spent his days and nights in prayer and fasting and scourging his bare bones with the discipline. Herlouin, for his part, having no open quarrel with Belem, chose to remain at the Red Fell; for he thought, "certainly Belem will not give over his blood-feud for an oath let slip in the article of death. It may be that by staying I shall do Sagramor a service." So he endured as well as he could the stark silence, the meditation of murder, and the worse than meditation, with which Belem filled the house, keeping close watch on whatever might be intended against the Graceless Guard. The first thing was that Belem most villainously slew those wretched thralls that he had, Gaunt and Ros and Meskyn de la Garde, and stuck their lean heads on spikes outside the gatehouse. Herlouin took this shameful news down to his brother.

When Sagramor heard it he defaced his shield and spoiled the crest on his helm; which done, he gave up his lodging with the hermit of the Ford and went down into the plain of Powys, to the Graceless Guard. Standing up there, bare of all cognizance, he cried out in a loud voice, "Take heed of the renunciation of a good knight," over and over again until they of the castle were aware of him, and came out on to the tower to hear what he had to say. Those two twin persons came out; so Sagramor saw again under a veil of steel the lady of his heart, though which of the two were she he could not tell.

One of them calls from the tower, "Who art thou, renouncing there; and what dost thou renounce?"

Sagramor, baring his head, cries, "I am Sagramor of the Red Fell, brother of the false knight Belem; whom now I utterly renounce, and with him my blood, name, and arms."

Then the speaker from the tower asked him, "Wilt thou serve us, Sir Sagramor?" and he said, "Yes." So the other then, "Come into the castle and help us; for we are only two here now, Audiart and Lewknor, brother and sister, and all the rest of our kindred and household slain by Sir Belem. Come in, therefore, and help us." But Sagramor lifted up his right hand, saying, "By my soul, I will not come into your castle until I am worthy of its glorious tenant, my lady Audiart, whom I love and serve in the dark." To this no answer was returned from the tower, though brother and sister looked quickly at one another; so Sagramor stayed below in the weather with what comfort he could suck from the near neighborhood, refusing all manner of meat or sustenance from within doors. This went on for many weeks.

AFTER A TIME it came to young Sir Herlouin's understanding that Belem was compassing a great new villainy against the Graceless Guard, namely, to attack it in strong force, kill Lewknor, and serve Dame Audiart as her brother Sir Pereduc had served his wife—that is, to wed her by force. Herlouin rode down into Powys by stealth and told the news to Sagramor, whom he found much aged and very cold, standing by the outer gate. "Let Belem come," says Sagramor. "I am ready for him." To Herlouin the good knight seemed by no means ready; but he let the two within the Guard know the story, and they made ready, after a fashion of their own.

They sent out a messenger to the Red Fell, a certain Welshman called Owain, a priest. Belem was at meat, Herlouin with him. "Bring in the priest," he says; so they brought him in, a thin-faced man, pinched with cold, for now was the winter weather come into the March.

"My lord," said this priest, "this is my message to you from my master Sir Lewknor of the Graceless Guard. You shall ride alone to the Guard, and unarmed, so you shall take away the bride. But if you come armed or in force, your brother Sir Sagramor shall have her."

"Do you take me for a fool?" says Belem. "What proof have I that you meditate no treachery against me?"

"Sir," replied the priest, "my master has provided against your reasonable doubts. He himself will be hostage for your safety. This is what you shall do. Let your brother Sir Herlouin come first in arms to the Guard. My master will give himself up into his hands, and will so remain until you have obtained her whom you seek. Will this content you?"

"By no means," says Belem; "for they may have their Graceless Guard filled with men." The priest with a fierce cry knocked his breast.

"Ah, would to God that they had, Belem!" he said. "Then I had never been here on such an errand. But now in that great castle there are only two, Lewknor and his sister Audiart; the others all slain, by you."

Belem says, "Good, I agree to your proffer. Sit down and eat." But the priest would not.

So it all was done. Lewknor de la Garde met Herlouin in the midst of the snowy pass about the time of the going down of the sun. He was unarmed and bareheaded; and Herlouin saw that his hair, black as a raven's wing, fell rippling to his saddle. Also he had a cold, beautiful face, a mouth shaped like a girl's, and as soft. Together the youths went down into Powys, and Audiart let them into the Graceless Guard.

Outside the gate, upon the trampled snow, Herlouin saw an armed knight on watch who, from being motionless as a figure of stone, when Dame Audiart came and stood in the door, went down upon one knee; but said nothing, neither looked at her. Herlouin, for his part, did look from the sister to the brother, and back again, marveling that such likeness and diversity could at once consist. She was of the same height to a hair, of the same goodly proportions, and (with the difference proper to a maid) of the same shape. Not that she was richly endowed with the grace and treasure of women; otherwise, being yet very young, she was slight, boyishly made, rather than not. The dark lashes of her eyes were no longer than his, nor her cheeks, nor her chin, nor her mouth more delicately soft. Herlouin looked at her hands; they were small. So were Lewknor's. He saw her foot, and judged Lewknor's, if anything, the smaller. Her hair reached her middle, and his went just so far. But at this time she was clothed from neck to heel in white silk, after the manner of brides, and on her head she had a little fillet of silver leaves, like the leaves of a box-tree. Such a lively sympathy beat between the pair, that when Sir Sagramor dropped upon his knee and the girl grew red, so also did her brother Lewknor—very beautiful to see.

Then she spoke, asking, "Will you serve me, Sir Sagramor, good knight?" and Sagramor said, "I will serve you utterly."

"Then," says she, "take my brother Lewknor here for esquire of your body, and keep him from the hostility of his enemy, Sir Belem. Will you do this?"

"Lady," says Sagramor, "I shall do it. But what will you yourself do?"

She told him. "I go to expiate the blood-feud between my house and yours. I shall go home with Sir Belem." Sagramor cried out in his pain, "Oh, horrible, you dare not do it, nor ask us to allow it." She, smiling bitterly, "Do you not know that I am of the Graceless Guard. Is there anything, upon our own showing, that we dare not do?"

Sagramor sternly said, "There is one thing that no maiden dare to do"; and she, bowing her head, responded, "That thing dare not I. Yet they who love me trust me." So it was Sagramor's turn to bow down his head. Whereupon she came and put her hand upon his shoulder, saying, "Do you trust me, Sagramor, who say that I have your love?"

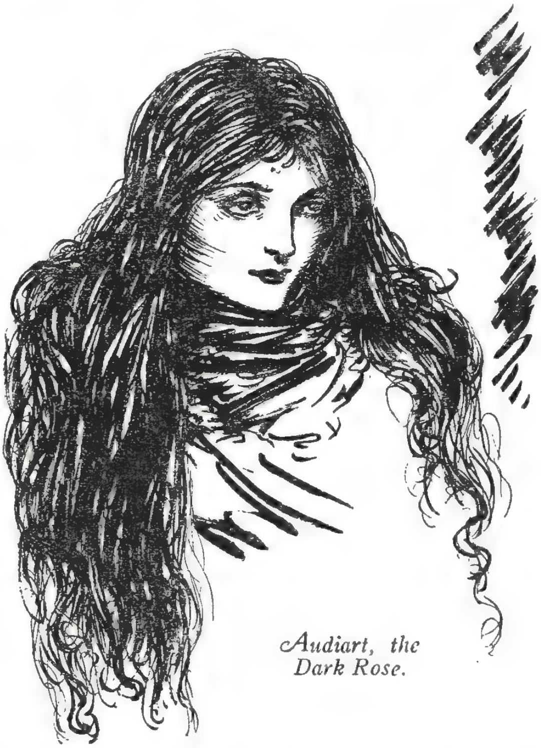
He replied, "I do trust."

"Stay here, then," she bade him, "until you see me depart between Sir Belem and Sir Herlouin. Wait for my brother Lewknor, and treat him well for my sake." When Sagramor looked up at her it was to be seen by the light of the new-risen moon that his eyes were wet. "Lady of my love and duty," said he, "I shall obey you in all things from point to point. But if I may never see you again whom I shall hold in my heart until my life's end, I shall beseech of you one favor."

"Name it," says she.

"It is," he told her, "that you kiss me once." Again she grew very red and hesitated for a long time; again Lewknor blushed. But afterwards she consented and Sagramor got up and kissed her on the mouth. Then she with Lewknor and Herlouin went into the Guard to wait for Belem.

Two hours after moonrise, as they sat waiting, they heard his horn at the gate. The three of them looked suddenly at each other, rather at the pale discs which they knew to be their faces, for nothing else could they see. Then Audiart whispered to her brother, "Lewknor, go and let him in." So he went away and opened wide the doors of the hall, next the gate of the inner bailey, and next let down the bridge, and lastly set open the gate of the outer bailey. Then Belem rode into the hall, and drew rein; and they saw horse and man stand like statues looming in the dusk, with Lewknor beside them barely reaching to the rider's knee. For once he had kept his word, being without spear or sword.



Audiart, the Dark Rose.

I have told you he was a silent man. Any other would have said, "Madam, I have come," or "Madam, here am I"; but Belem said nothing at all. But the fever which gripped Audiart moved her to ask what she knew perfectly well.

"Who art thou, horseman?" saith she: and Belem, "You know who I am. Come."

She says, with a sharp-drawn breath, "In a good hour I come"; and got up from her place and came forward.

Her brother Lewknor, whose fear (to judge from his bungling) seemed wilder than her own, put a long black cloak over her, shaking as he did it. Herlouin went to help him. "Courage, friend," said this young man under his breath; "I ride along with them, to do what I can." When the girl was made ready, Lewknor led her forward; Belem, stooping, lifted her under the arms, and set her before him on the saddle. So with not a word he turned and rode fast out of doors; and Herlouin with all speed had mounted and followed after, leaving his brother Sagramor with young Lewknor alone in the Graceless Guard.

Now follow those who first departed. The three of them rode under the moon from Powys into England over hard ground upon which lay a powder of clean snow. Not a word was spoken until they reached the Red Fell, dark and enormous, before which stood one with a torch to show the way. Dismounting first and in haste, Herlouin helped down Audiart, Belem consenting. He, when he had got off deliberately (being stiff in his joints), faced his younger brother, saying shortly, "Now, Herlouin, go your way. Here is no lodging for you." Herlouin—a pretty good judge by this time—thought to hear murder in his voice. "By my Lord God, Belem," he replied, "I leave you not this night." Said Belem, "A dead man you remain, but not otherwise on my wedding night." Herlouin laughed. "Oh, Belem," he said, "do your murdering on me if you can; but until that is done or not done you do not touch this lady." Belem sent the groom for his sword, and Herlouin said, "Fetch mine also, Simon"; but Belem, "Fetch my sword only." It was plain that he meant to kill his brother.

Then spoke that still and hooded lady Audiart. "I see in you, Sir Herlouin, the mettle of a knight. Now I ask you, enter not the Red Fell, but leave me alone with Sir Belem. Tomorrow at the crowing of the second cock, come to this gate, and I will let you in." Belem gave a gross laugh, took the girl in his arms and kissed her. This made Herlouin furious. "Two of my brothers have saluted you, sister," he said; "now you shall greet me in likewise." So said, he also kissed her in full sight of Belem; and as their mouths met she whispered to him, quick and low, "Trust me, O Herlouin." Without any knowledge to bottom his faith he did so, and turned and went to his horse. He saw her go in with Belem; he saw the torch follow: the moon took up again her cold spell over the world. They lit no candles in the Red Fell; he heard nothing, saw nothing, no cry, no moving light. With what spirit he had in him he set himself to watch out the remaining dark hours, scarce daring to think of what might be doing within the house lest he should remember what had been done there before.

The first cock crew far down in the valley or ever the day-dawn shivered in the east. His cry found

Herlouin before the gates, peering for sign of life or some assurance in the great blind house of something beside death. Then as the light came timorously, stealing over the snowy waste, he heard the sound of men riding, who seemed to be coming from the west. His heart stood still, for he thought, "If that should be Sagramor my brother, come to call me liar and coward." And he knew then that it could be no other, and dared not go to meet him.

The second cock crew, and behold, a long splinter of light stream like a bar across the east. "Alas, for faith given fondly!" said Herlouin to himself: "now Sagramor will kill me, and will do well." Even as he spoke the gates of the Red Fell opened; there walked out a youth clad in green, bare-headed, pale, and grave-eyed, whose hair fell ripping to his middle; who greeted him, saying, "Benedicite, Sir Herlouin." At this sight, to see Lewknor come out when Audiart had gone in, Herlouin reeled in his saddle, having no words in his throat, nor wit in his head to have conceived them. At that time came riding up Sir Sagramor, and with him, marvelous to be seen, that very same youth whom they took to be Lewknor—bareheaded, pale, and grave-eyed, clad in green, with dark hair falling to his saddle-bow. Herlouin, gaping from one to another, turned and spurred toward Sagramor. "Brother, brother, we are bewitched! I came in with Audiart and now have Lewknor!"

"No, no, Herlouin," says Sagramor, "I have Lewknor here."

Says Herlouin, "Come and help me to see then." But Sagramor spurred on ahead of him, having but one thought.

Springing from his saddle, he confronted the youth in the gate. "O thou, whoever thou art," he said awfully, "tell me the fate of my lady Audiart."

The youth said, "Come and see." So Herlouin and Sagramor followed these other two into the castle; and over the inner gate was a spiked pole, and on the top of the pole the head of Belem, grinning in death. But the heads of all the sons of Graceless Guard were gone from the spikes where they had been stuck, and so were the spikes themselves.

Sagramor said nothing, because he was thinking, and Herlouin nothing, because he was unable to think; but presently Sagramor smote the face of Belem with his gauntlet, saying, "Thou felon thief, Belem. For this only I grieve: that it was not I who set thee there."

Turning then, he said to the three others, "Follow me." When he had led them into the hall, to the top of it, and made them sit down, he went away, and shortly came back with a jug of wine, some bread and apples. They sopped their bread in the wine, and broke their fast. Then Sagramor took three apples. "Catch, Herlouin," he said, and threw him one of them. So he said to the youth who sat next to Herlouin, and so did. The apple went low down; but Lewknor (if Lewknor this might be) clapped-to his knees and caught it upon them. Once more Sagramor took an apple, and saying "Catch, Lewknor," threw it to the second youth. This other Lewknor, to receive it, opened wide his knees, so that the apple fell through them to the ground; then instantly Sagramor with a glad cry sprang up from his place and caught the bungler kissing in his arms. "Thou art Audiart and my dear love," he cried exulting, "with whom I have journeyed all this night!" It was very easy to see the truth now by her manner of answering. Then Sagramor turned to the real Lewknor, and kissed him fondly. "Oh, thou brave knight," quoth he, "here was honest trickery indeed. Now tell us how thou faredst this night." So Lewknor told them what had passed between him and Belem; how when they were within the house Belem had sent the bride to bed, and the bride, obedient, had lain long, waiting in the dark. Presently Belem comes in, ready for bed, with a lighted lamp held on high, that he might see and not be seen. What he saw was this, a grave, slim youth in green sitting on the bed with his chin on his knees, silent and restrained, and his dark hair all about him like a mantle.

"Who art thou?" says Belem; and the youth, "I am Lewknor of Graceless Guard, last of my father's sons."

"Why art thou here, last of my enemies?" says Belem; and Lewknor again, "For my sister's sake."

"You do her no service, fool," said Belem; "death is here." Lewknor replied between his teeth, "It is here. Take it, you big dog"; and leaped upon him and bit him in the neck. Belem threw up his head as he grappled, and by that means Lewknor got his own head well under the strong man's chin. Belem struck downwards at him with the lamp, which was put out; but Lewknor drew his knife and drove it into Belem's ribs. So the tussle was done; "and the end," says Lewknor, "you know." Sagramor looked up with tears. He took the two hands of Audiart in his and kissed them. "O brave sweet Audiart," he said, "now let our joint life make amends for deaths so many and so bitter."

"Amen, Sagramor," says she, "God helping us."

What more is there to say? There is nothing, save this, that those two loved greatly; and that Lewknor de la Garde, following the English fashion, cut his hair short.

Lament

By ROY NORTON

Oh, nomad feet that would wander wide at will!
Oh, nomad restless heart, that never can be still!
Why must this brave twain yield to time and age
Until both lie dead; perchance grieving
For journeys still undone?
No longer obedient to the lure of far roads,
Of golden rain, and of unconquered hills!

A Triple Roundel by GEOFFREY CHAUCER

Merciless Beauty

With a modern version by William Carr

I.

Yowre yen two wolle sle me sodenly,
I may the beaute of them not sustene,
So wondeth it thorowout my herte kene.
And but your word will helen hastily
Mi hertis wounde, while that hit is grene,
Your yen two wol sle me sodenly,
I may the beaute of hem not sustene.

Upon my trouth I sey yow feithfully
That ye ben of my liffe and deth the quene;
For with my deth the trouthe shal be sene.
Your yen two wol sle me sodenly
I may the beaute of them not sustene
So wondeth hit thorowout my herte kene.

II.

So hath yowr beaute fro your herte chaced
Pitee that me navailleth not to pleyn,
For Danger halt your mercy in his cheyne.
Giltless my deth thus han ye me purchaced;
I sey yow soth, me nedeth not to fayn.
So hath your beaute fro your herte chaced
Pite that me navailleth not to pleyn.

Allas that nature hath in yow compased
So grete beaute, that no man may atteyn
To mercy, though he sterve for the peyn.
So hath your beaute fro your herte chaced
Pite that me navailleth not to pleyn
For Danger halt your mercy in his cheyne.

III.

Syn I fro Love escaped am so fat,
I never thenk to ben in his prison lene;
Sin I am free, I counte him not a bene.
He may answere and sey this or that;
I do no fors, I speke right as I mene,
Syn I fro Love escaped am so fat
I nevere thenk to ben in his prison lene.

Love hath my name istrike out of his sclat,
And he is strike out of my bokes clene
For evermo, this is non other mene,
Syn I fro Love escaped am so fat,
I nevere thenk to ben in his prison lene;
Sin I am free I counte him not a bene.

I

Your two bright eyes will slay me suddenly,
The beauty of them I may not sustain,
Their quick glance pierces through my heart with pain.
Unless your words do heal right hastily
My wounded heart before it breaks in twain,
Your two bright eyes will slay me suddenly,
The beauty of them I may not sustain.

Now by my troth I tell you faithfully
That like a queen above my life you reign.
With my quick death the truth shall be made plain,
Your two bright eyes will slay me suddenly,
The beauty of them I may not sustain.
Their quick glance pierces through my heart with pain.

II

So hath your beauty from your heart displaced
Compassion, that 'tis useless to complain.
Your power holds back your mercy in his chain
And thus on you my guiltless death is placed—
I say the truth, I have no need to feign:
So hath your beauty from your heart displaced
Compassion, that 'tis useless to complain.

Alas! that Nature over you has traced
So great a beauty no man may attain
To get your mercy, though he die for pain.
So hath your beauty from your heart displaced
Compassion, that 'tis useless to complain.
Your power holds back your mercy in his chain.

III

Since I have thus escaped from Love so pat
I plan not in his prison to remain.
Now I am free I count him not a grain.
So let him argue, saying this or that;
From shouting what I think I'll not refrain:
Since I have thus escaped from Love so pat
I plan not in his prison to remain.

Love's name is crossed right off my list—that's flat.
I've closed up his account in high disdain
Forevermore; objections are in vain.
Since I have thus escaped from Love so pat
I plan not in his prison to remain.
Since I am free I count him not a grain!

Sanders, English Commissioner,

Nine Terrible Men

By EDGAR WALLACE

There were nine terrible men in the Forest of O'tomb', so native reports had it.

Nine terrible men who lived on an island set in a swamp. And the swamp was hard to come by, being in the midst of a vast forest. Only a monkey or a leopard could find a way to the inhabitants of this island—they themselves being privy to the secret ways. No man of the Isisi, of the N'Gombi, of the Akasava, or of the river tribes, attempted to track down the nine, for, as was generally known, most powerful ju-jus guarded all paths that led to the secret place.

Nine outlawed men, with murder and worse upon their souls, they came together, God knows how, and preyed upon their world.

They raided with impunity, being impartial as to whether Isisi or N'Gombi paid toll.

By night they would steal forth in single file, silent as death, no twig cracking in their path, no word spoken. As relentless as the soldier ant in his march of destruction, they made their way without hindrance to the village they had chosen for the scene of their operations, took what they wanted and returned.

Sometimes they wanted food, sometimes spears—for these lords of the woods were superior to craftsmanship—sometimes a woman or two went and never came back. Such lawless communities were not uncommon. Occasionally very ordinary circumstances put an end to them; some there were that flourished, like the People-Who-Were-Not-All-Alike.

The Nine Terrible Men of the O'tomb' existed because nothing short of an army corps could have surrounded them, and because, as Sanders thought, they were not a permanent body, but dispersed at times to their several homes.

Sanders once sent two companies of Houssas to dislodge the nine, but they did nothing, for the simple reason that never once did they get within shooting distance. Then Sanders came himself, and caught little else than a vicious attack of malarial fever.

He sent messages to all the chiefs of the people within a radius of a hundred miles to kill at sight any of the nine, offering certain rewards. After three palpably inoffensive men of the Ochori tribe had been killed, and the reward duly claimed, Sanders countermanded the order.

For two years the nine ravaged at will, then a man of the Isisi, one Fembeni, found grace.

Fembeni became a Christian, though there is no harm in that. This is not satire, but a statement with a reservation. There are certain native men who embrace the faith and lose quality thereby, but Fembeni was a Christian and a better man—except——

Here is another reservation.

Up at Mosunkusu a certain Ruth Glandynne labored for the cause, she being a medical missionary, and pretty to boot. White folk would call her pretty because she had regular features, a faultless complexion, and a tall, well-modeled figure.

Black folk thought she was plain, because her lips were not as they should be by convention; nor was she developed according to their standards.

Also, from N'Gombi point of view, her fair, long hair was ridiculous, and her features "like a bird."

Mr. Commissioner Sanders thought she was very pretty indeed—when he allowed himself to think about her.

He did not think about her more often than he could help, for two reasons—the only one that is any business of yours and mine being that she was an enormous responsibility. He had little patches of white hair on either side of his temple—when he allowed his hair to grow long enough for these to become visible—which he called grimly his "missionary hairs." The safety of the solitary stations set in the wilds was a source of great worry.

You must understand that missionaries are very good people. Those ignoramuses who sneer at them place themselves in the same absurd position as those who sneer at Nelson or speak slightingly of other heroes. Missionaries take terrible risks—they cut themselves adrift from the material life which is worth the living; they endure hardships incomprehensible to the uninitiated; they suffer from tempestuous illnesses which find them hale and hearty in the morning and leave their feeble bodies near death at sunset.

"And all this they do," said Bosambo of Monrovia, philosophically and thoughtfully, "because of certain mysteries which happened when the world was young and a famous Man called Hesu.* Now I think that is the greatest mystery of all."

Sanders appreciated the disinterestedness of the work, was immensely impressed by the courage of the people who came to labor in the unhealthy field, but all the time he fretfully wished they wouldn't.

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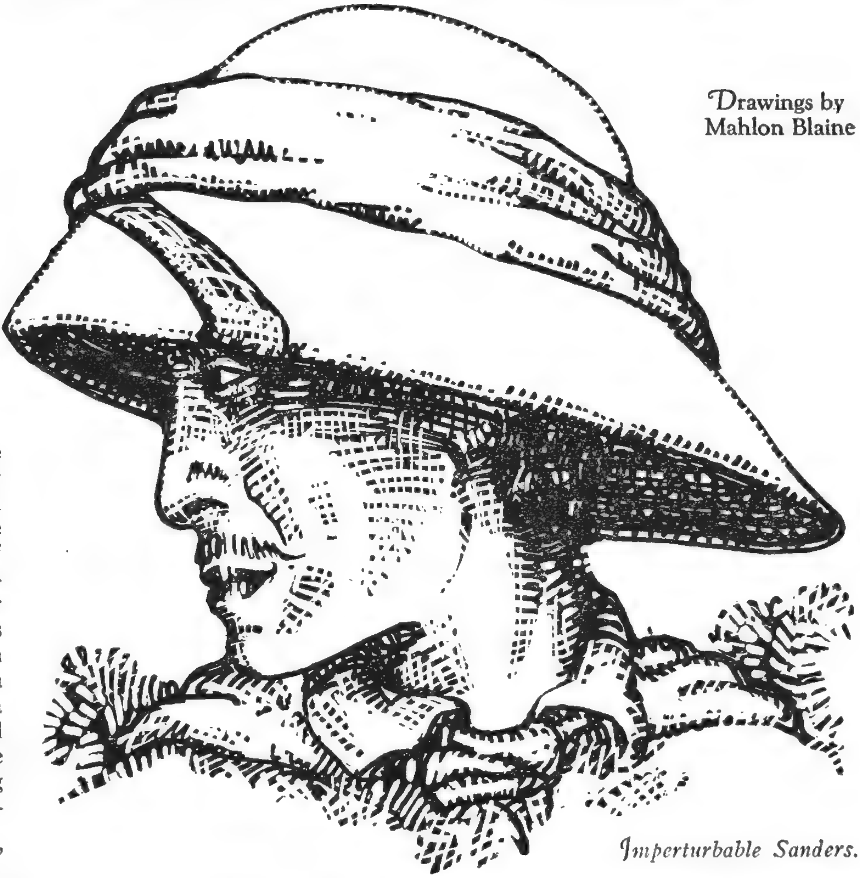
*The Second Person of the Trinity is so called in some dialects.

goes to the rescue of a fair lady missionary

Drawings by
Mahlon Blaine



Imperturbable Sanders.

His feelings were those of a professional lion-tamer who sees a light-hearted amateur stepping into the cage of the most savage of his beasts; they were feelings of the skilled matador who watches the novice's awkward handling of an Andalusian bull—a troubled matador with a purple cloak held ready and one neatly-shod foot on the barrier, ready to spring into the ring at the novello's need.

The "missionary patches" grew larger and whiter in the first few months of Ruth Glandynne's presence at Musunkusu, for this village was too near to the wild N'Gombi, too near the erratic Isisi, for Sanders's liking. Sanders might easily have made a mistake in his anxiety. He might have sent messengers to the two peoples, or gone in person—threatening them with death and worse than death if they harmed the girl.

But that would have aroused a sense of importance in their childlike bosoms, and when the time came, as it assuredly would come, when their stomachs were angry against him, some chief would say:

"Behold, here is a woman who is the core of Sandi's eye. If we do her harm we shall be revenged on Sandi."

And, since children do not know any other tomorrow than the tomorrow of good promise, it would have gone badly with the lady missionary.

Instead, Sanders laid upon Bosambo, chief of the Ochori, charge of this woman, and Bosambo he trusted in all big things, though in the matter of goods movable and goods convertible he had no such confidence.

When Fembeni of the Isisi was converted from paganism to Christianity, Sanders was fussing about the little creeks which abound on the big river, looking for a man named Oko, who, after a long and mysterious absence had returned to his village, killed his wife, and fled to the bush.

The particular bush happened to be in the neighborhood of the mission station, otherwise Sanders might have been content to allow his policemen to carry out the good work; but no sooner did news come that Oko had broken for that section of the N'Gombi country which impinges on Musunkusu, than Sanders went flying up river in his steamer because something told him he had identified one of the nine men.

Wrote Sergt. Ahmed, the Houssa, who prided himself on his English, to his wife at headquarters:

> "At daylight, when search for murderer was officially resumed, came our Lord Sundah very actively angry. By orders I took left bank of Kulula River with three men, being ordered to shoot aforesaid Oko if resistance offered. Abiboo (sergeant) took right or other bank, and our lord searched bush. Truly Oko must be a very important man that Sundah comes officially searching for same, saying bitter reproach words to his humble servants."

Ahmed's picture of his chief's agitation may be a little exaggerated, but I do not doubt that there was a substratum of fact therein.

On the second day of the hunt, Sanders's steamer was tied up at the mission station, and he found himself walking in the cool of the evening with Ruth Glandynne. So he learned about Fembeni, the Isisi man who had found the light and was hot and eager for salvation.

"H'm!" said Sanders, displaying no great enthusiasm. But she was too elated over her first convert to notice the lack of warmth in his tone.

"It is just splendid," she said, her gray eyes alight and her pretty face kindling with the thought, "especially when you remember, Mr. Sanders, that I have only an imperfect knowledge of the language."

"Are you sure," asked the incredulous Sanders, "that Fembeni understands what it is all about?"

"Oh, yes!" She smiled at the Commissioner's simplicity. "Why, he met me half-way, as it were; he came out to meet the truth; he——"

"Fembeni?" said Sanders thoughtfully. "I think I know the man; if I remember him aright he is not the sort of person who would get religion if he did not see a strong business end to it."

She frowned a little. Her eyebrows made a level line over resentful eyes.

"I think that is unworthy of you," she said coldly.

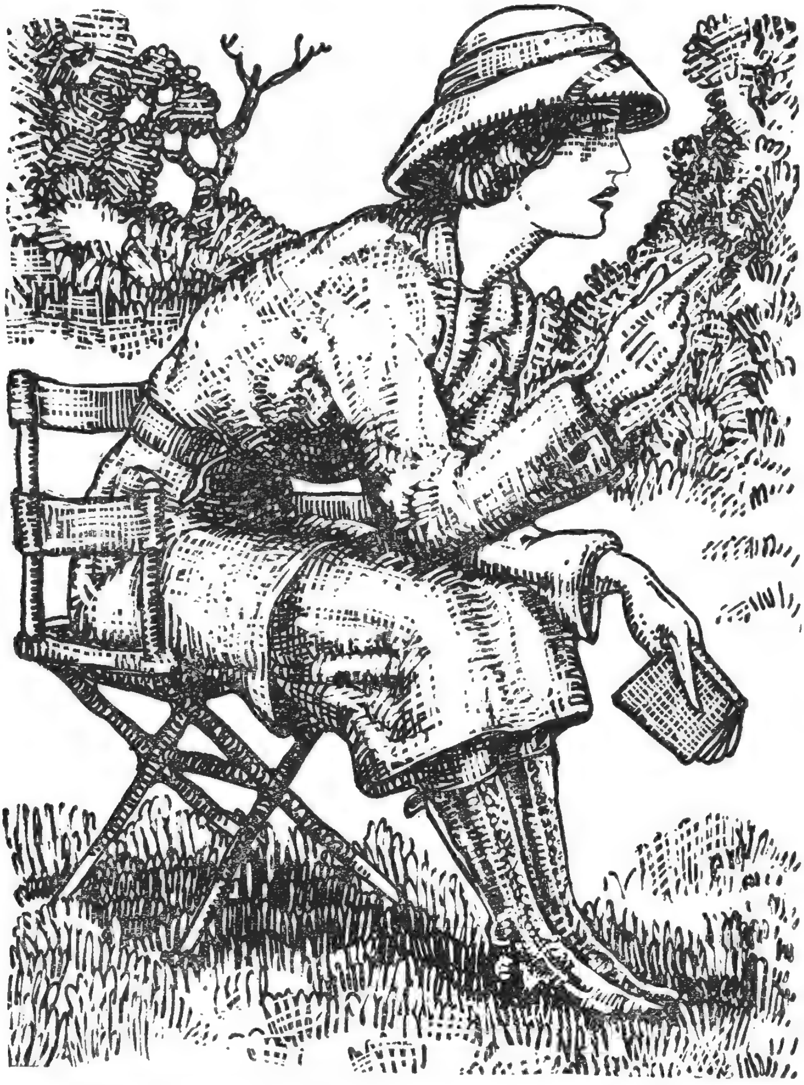
He looked at her, the knuckle of his front finger at his lips. She was very pretty, he thought, or else he had been so long removed from the society of white women that she seemed beautiful only because she stood before a background of brutal ugliness.

Slim, straight, grave-eyed, complexion faultless, though tanned by the African sun, features regular and delicate, hair (a quantity) russet-brown.

Sanders shook his head.

"I wish to heaven you weren't monkeying about in this infernal country," he said.

"That is beside the question," she replied with a little smile. "We are talking of Fembeni, and I think you are being rather horrid."



Ruth Glandynne . . . a medical missionary and pretty to boot.

They reached the big square hut that Sanders had built for her, and climbed the wooden steps that led to the stoep. Sanders made no reply, but when she had disappeared into the interior of the hut to make him some tea, he beckoned to Abiboo, who had followed him at a respectful distance.

"Go you," he said, "and bring me Fembeni of the Isisi."

He was stirring his tea whilst the girl was giving him a rosy account of her work, when Fembeni came, a tall man of middle age, wearing the trousers and waistcoat which were the outward and visible signs of his inward and spiritual grace.

"Come near, Fembeni," said Sanders gently.

The man walked with confidence up the steps of the stoep, and without invitation drew a chair toward him and seated himself. Sanders said nothing. He looked at the man for a very long time, then:

"Who asked you to sit in my presence?" he said softly.

"Lord," said Fembeni pompously, "since I have found the blessed truth——"

Something in Sanders's eyes caused him to rise hurriedly.

"You may sit—on the ground," said Sanders quietly, "after the manner of your people, and I will sit on this chair after the manner of mine. For behold, Fembeni, even the blessed truth shall not make black white or white black; nor shall it make you equal with Sandi, who is your master."

"Lord, that is so," said the sullen Fembeni, "yet we are all equal in the eyes of the great One."

"Then there are a million people in the Isisi, in the N'Gombi, the Akasava, and the Ochori, who are your equals," said Sanders, "and it is no shame for you to do as they do." Which was unanswerable, according to Fembeni's sense of logic.

The girl had listened to the talk between her novitiate and the commissioner with rising wrath, for she had not Sanders's knowledge of native people.

"I think that is rather small of you, Mr. Sanders," she said hotly. "It is a much more important matter that a heathen should be brought to the truth than that your dignity should be preserved."

Sanders frowned horribly—he had no society manners and was not used to disputation.

"I do not agree with you, Miss Glandynne," he said a little gruffly, "for, whilst the Isisi cannot see the ecstatic condition of his soul which leads him to be disrespectful to me, they can and do see the gross materialism of his sotting body."

A thought struck him and he turned to the man. That thought made all the difference between life and death to Fembeni.

"Fembeni," he said, relapsing into the language of the Isisi, "you are a rich man by all accounts."

"Lord, it is so."

"And wives—how many have you?"

"Four, Lord."

Sanders nodded and turned to the girl.

"He has four wives," he said.

"Well?"

There was a hint of defiance in the questioning "Well?"

"He has four wives," repeated Sanders. "What is your view on this matter?"

"He shall marry one in the Christian style," she said, flushing. "Oh, you know, Mr. Sanders, it is impossible for a man to be a Christian and have more wives than one!"

Sanders turned to the man again.

"In this matter of wives, Fembeni," he said gently; "how shall you deal with the women of your house?"

Fembeni wriggled his bare shoulders uncomfortably.

"Lord I shall put them all away, save one," he said sulkily, "for that is the blessed way."

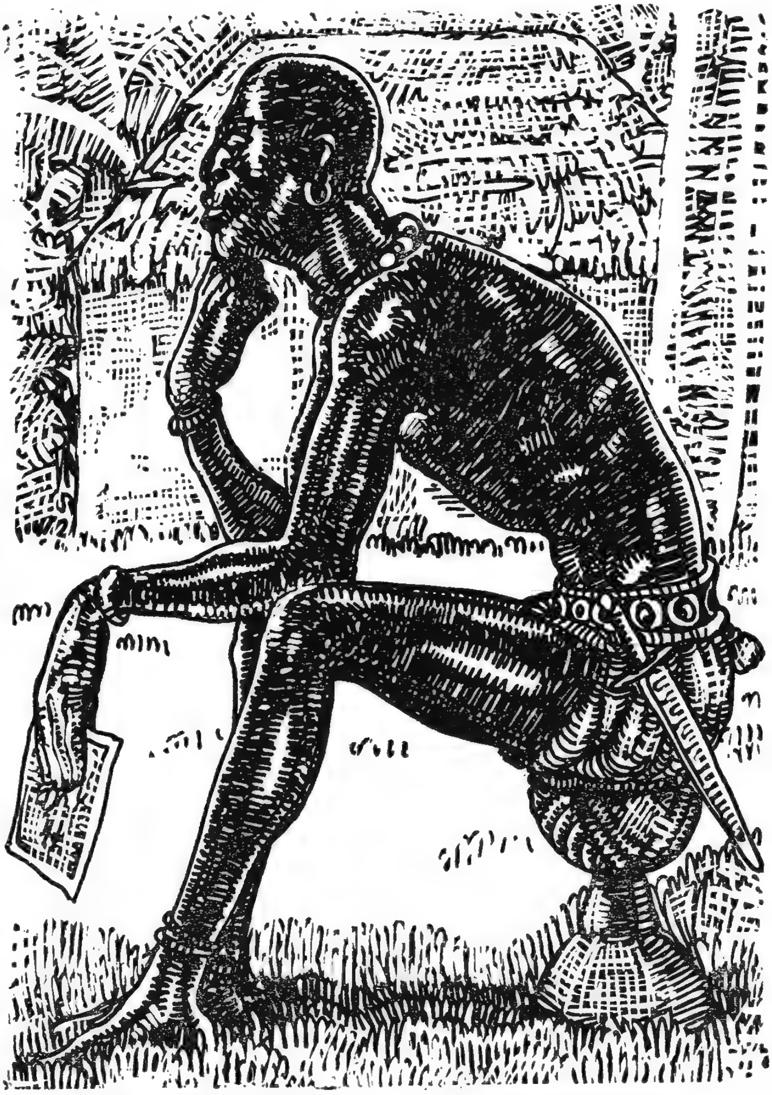
"H'm!" said Sanders for the second time that morning. He was silent for a long time, then:

"It is rather a problem," he said.

"It presents no difficulty to my mind," said the girl stiffly. She was growing very angry, though Sanders did not realize the fact, being unused to the ways of white women.

"I think it is rather horrid of you, Mr. Sanders, to discourage this man, to put obstacles in his faith——"

"I put no obstacles," interrupted the Commissioner. He was short of speech, being rather so intent upon his subject that he took no account of the fine feelings of a zealous lady missionary. "But I cannot allow this to happen in my district; this man has four wives, each of them has borne him children. What justice or what Christianity is there in turning loose three women who have served this man?"



Fembeni, the Isisi man . . . hot and eager for salvation.

Here was a problem for the girl, and in her desperation she used an argument which was unanswerable.

"The law allows this," she said. "These things happen all over the world where missionary work is in progress. Perhaps I could bring the women to understand; perhaps I could explain——"

"You couldn't explain the babies out of existence," said Sanders brutally.

That ended the discussion, for with a look of scorn and disgust she passed into the hut, leaving Sanders a prey to some emotion.

He turned a cold eye to the offending Fembeni.

"It seems," he said, "that a man by becoming a Christian has less mouths to fill. Now I must investigate this matter."

Fembeni regarded him apprehensively, for if a woman is questioned, who knows what she will say? And it was fairly unimportant to the man if he had one wife or forty.

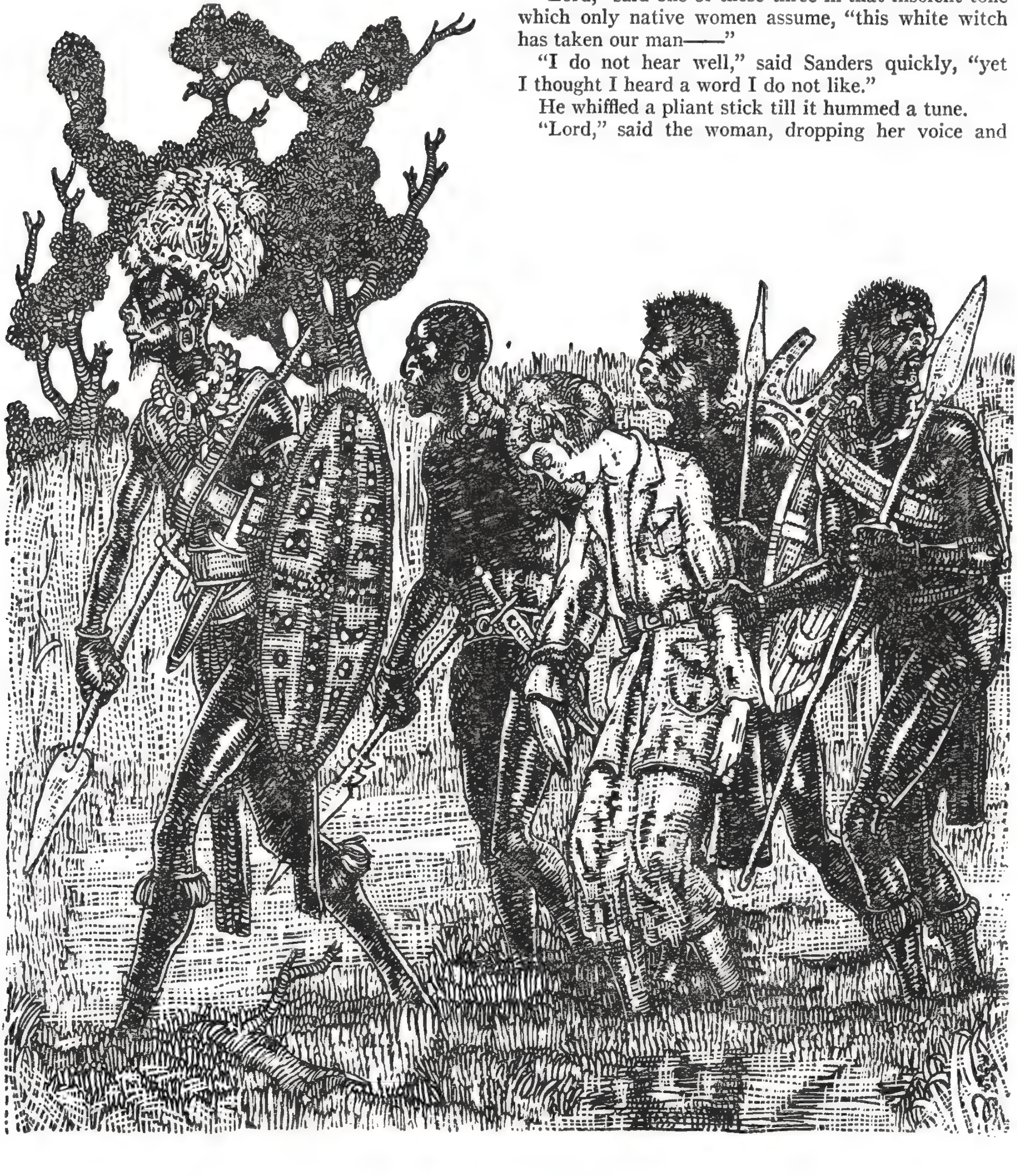
There was no possibility of searching any farther that night for the erring Oko, and Sanders was rowed across the river in his canoe to interview the wives of the new convert. He found one woman who viewed the coming change with considerable philosophy, and three who were very shrill and very voluble.

"Lord," said one of these three in that insolent tone which only native women assume, "this white witch has taken our man——"

"I do not hear well," said Sanders quickly, "yet I thought I heard a word I do not like."

He whiffled a pliant stick till it hummed a tune.

"Lord," said the woman, dropping her voice and



speaking more mildly, "this God-lady has taken our man."

"God-ladies do not take men," said Sanders; "rather they influence their spirits that they may be better men."

"Fembeni will be no better and no worse," said the woman bitterly, "for he goes to the forest by night; often he has risen from my side, and when he has gone, behold the Nine Terrible Men have come from nearby and taken that which they wanted."

She stopped abruptly. There was horror in the eyes which met the Commissioner's; in her anger she had said too much.

"That is foolish talk," said Sanders easily.

He knew there would be no more information here and he played to quiet her fears.

He strolled through the village, talked a while with the headman, and returned to his canoe.

Once on the *Zaire* he summoned Abiboo.

"Take three men and bring Fembeni to me," he said, "and be very ready to shoot him, for I have heard certain things."

He waited for ten minutes, then Abiboo returned—alone.

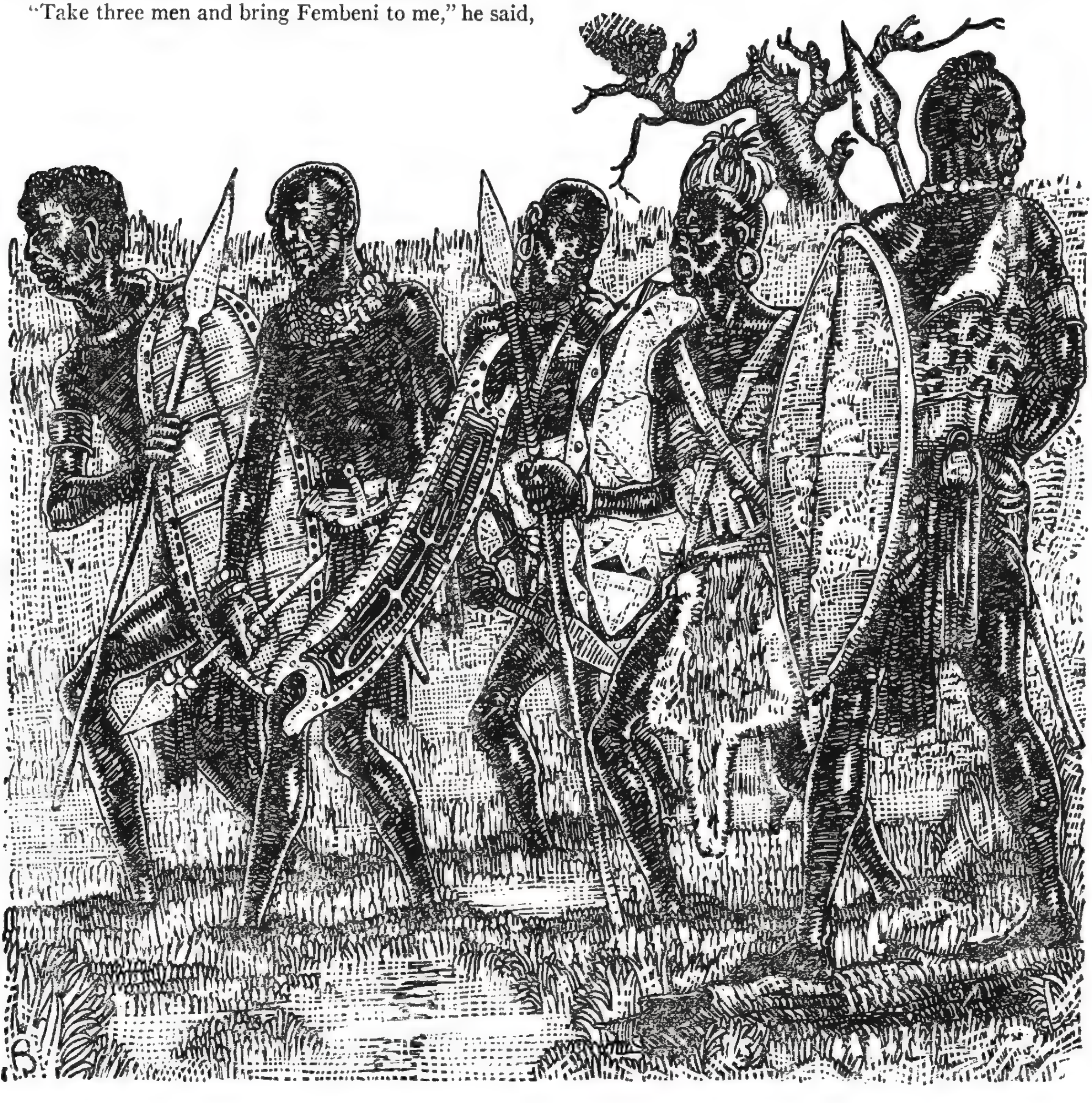
"Fembeni has gone into the forest," he said; "also the God-lady." Sanders looked at him.

"How?"

"Lord, this Fembeni is a Christian, and desired to speak with the God-woman of the new magic. So they walked together, the God-woman reading from a book. Also he had a gift for her, which he bought from a Frenchi trader."

"I see," said Sanders. He poured himself out a stiff glass of whiskey, and his hand shook a little.

They half-carried, half-dragged her in the direction of the headquarters of the Nine.



Then he lifted down a sporting rifle that hung on the wall of his cabin, broke open two packets of cartridges, and dropped them into his coat pocket.

"Let the men come on quickly," he said, "you commanding."

"Lord, there are other Sergeants," said Abiboo. "I will go with you, for I am at your right hand, though death waits me."

"As you will," said Sanders roughly.

He went through the missionary compound, stopping only that a boy should point out the direction the two had taken, then he moved swiftly toward the forest, Abiboo at his heels.

He followed the beaten track for a hundred yards. Then he stopped and sniffed like a dog. He went on a little farther and came back on his tracks. He stooped and picked up some pieces of broken glass and turned aside from the path, following his nose.

Ruth Glandynne had supreme faith in the power of the Word which makes martyrs.

"You must have no doubt, Fembeni," she said in her halting Isisi, "for with Light, such things as the Word brings, all things will be made plain to you."

They were beyond the confines of the little mission station, walking slowly toward the forest.

She read little extracts from the book she carried, and so full of her subject was she that she did not observe that they had passed the straggling trees, the outposts of the big forest.

When she did notice this she turned.

"More I will tell you, Fembeni," she said.

"Lady, tell me now," he begged, "for Sandi has made me doubt."

She frowned. What mischief can a materialist work! She had liked Sanders. Now for one resentful moment she almost hated him.

"There are white men who doubt," she said, "and who place pitfalls in the way——"

"Also this have I bought for you," said Fembeni, "paying one bag of salt." From the leather pouch at his side he produced a long flat flask.

She smiled as she recognized the floral label of the abominable scent beloved of the natives.

"This I bought for you, teacher," he said, and removed the stopper so that the unoffending evening reeked of a sudden with the odor of musk, "that you might protect me against Sandi, who is no God-man, but a devil."

She took the bottle and hastily replaced the stopper.

"Sandi is no devil," she said gently, "and will do you no harm."

"He has crossed the river," said Fembeni sulkily, and there was a curious glitter in his eyes, "and he will speak with my wives, and they will tell him evil things of me."

She looked at him gravely.

"What evil things can they say?" she asked.

"They can lie," he said shortly, "and Sandi will bring his rope and I shall die."

She smiled. "I do not think you need fear," she said, and began to walk back; but he stood in front of her, and at that instant she realized her danger, and the color faded from her face.

"If Sandi comes after me to kill me," he said slowly, "I shall say to him: 'Behold, I have a woman of your kind, and if you do not pardon me you will be sorry.' "

She thought quickly, then of a sudden leaped past him and fled in the direction of the station.

He was after her in a flash. She heard the fast patter of his feet, and suddenly felt his arm about her waist. She screamed, but there was none to hear her, and his big hand covered her mouth.

He shook her violently.

"You live or you die," he said; "but if you cry out I will beat you till you die."

He half carried, half dragged her in the direction of the forest.

She was nearly dead with fear; she was dimly conscious of the fact that he did not take the beaten path, that he turned at right angles and moved unerringly through the wood, following a path of his own knowing. As he turned she made another attempt to secure her liberty. She still held the scent flask in her hand, and struck at him with all her might. He caught her arm and nearly broke it.

The stopper fell out and her dress was drenched with the vile perfume. He wrenched the flask from her hand and threw it away.

Grasping her by the arm he led her on. She was nearly exhausted when he stopped, and she sank an inert heap to the ground.

She dared not faint, though she was on the verge of such a breakdown. How long they had been traveling she had no idea. The sun was setting; this she guessed rather than knew, for no sunlight penetrated the aisles.

Fembeni watched her; he sat with his back to a tree and regarded her thoughtfully. After a while he rose.

"Come," he said.

They moved on in silence. She made no appeal to him. She knew now the futility of speech. Her mind was still bewildered. "Why, why, why?" it asked. "Why had this man professed Christianity?"

"Fembeni," she faltered, "I have been kind to you."

"Woman," he said grimly, "you may be kinder."

She said no more.

The horror of the thing began to take shape. She half stopped, and he grasped her arm roughly.

"By my head you shall live," he said, "if Sandi gives his word that none of us shall hang—for we are the Terrible Men, and Sandi has smelled me out."

There was a gleam of hope in this speech. If it was only as a hostage that they held her——

Night had fallen when they came to water.

Here Fembeni halted. He searched about an undergrowth and dragged to view a section of hollow tree-trunk. Inside were two sticks of ironwood, and squatting before the lokali he rattled a metallic tattoo.

For ten minutes he played his tuneless rhythm. When he stopped there came a faint reply from somewhere across the lake.

They waited, the girl and her captor, for nearly half an hour. She strained her ears for the sound of oars, not knowing that the water did not extend for more than a hundred yards, and that beyond and around lay the great swamp wherein stood the island headquarters of the Nine.

The first intimation of the presence of others was a stealthy rustle, then through the gloom she saw the men coming toward her.

Fembeni grasped her arm and led her forward.

He exchanged a few words with the newcomers in a dialect she could not understand. There was a brief exchange of questions, and then the party moved on.

The ground beneath her feet grew soft and soddened. Sometimes the water was up to her ankles. The leader of the men picked his way unerringly, now following a semi-circular route, now turning off at right angles, now winding in and out, till she lost all sense of direction.

Her legs were like lead, her head was swimming, and she felt she was on the point of collapse when suddenly the party reached dry land.

A few minutes later they reached the tumbledown village which the outlaws had built themselves.

A fire was burning, screened from view by the arrangement of the huts which had been built in a crescent. The girl was shown a hut and thrust inside.

Soon afterwards a woman brought her a bowl of boiled fish and a gourd of water.

In her broken Isisi she begged the woman to stay with her, but she was evidently of the N'Gombi people and did not understand.

A few minutes later she was alone.

Outside the hut about the fire sat eight of the Nine Terrible Men. One of these was Oko of the Isisi, a man of some power.

"This woman I do not like," he said, "and by my way of thinking Fembeni is a fool and a son of a fool to bring her, unless she comes as other women have come—to serve us."

"Lord Oko," said Fembeni, "I am more skilled in the ways of white folk than you, and I tell you that if we keep this woman here it shall be well with us. For if Sandi shall catch you or me, or any of us, we shall say to him: 'There is a woman with us whom you greatly prize, and if you hang me you kill her also.'"

Still Oko was not satisfied.

"I also know white people and their ways," he said. "Sandi would have left us; now he will not rest till we are scattered and dead, for Sandi has a memory like the river, which never ceases to flow."

A man of the Akasava suggested an evil thing.

"That we shall consider," said Oko.

He had already decided. He had none of the subtlety of mind which distinguished Fembeni. He saw an end, and was for crowding in the space of life left to him as much of life as his hand could grasp.

They sat in palaver till early in the morning, the firelight reflected on the polished skin of their bodies.

Then Oko left the circle and crept to the girl's hut. They saw him stoop and enter, and heard a little scream.

"Oko has killed her," said Fembeni.

"It is best," said the other men.

Fembeni rose and went to the hut.

"Oko," he called softly, then stooped and went in.

Facing him was a ragged square of dim light, where a great hole had been cut in the farther side of the hut.

"Oko," he called sharply, then two hands of steel caught him by the throat and two others pulled his legs from under him.

He went to the ground, too terrified to resist.

"Fembeni," said a soft voice in his ear, "I have been waiting for you."

He was rolled on to his face and he made no resistance. His hands were pulled behind, and he felt the cold steel bands encircle his wrist and heard a "snick" as they fastened. He was as expeditiously gagged.

"As for Oko," said Sanders's voice, "he is dead, and if you had heard him cry you also would have been dead."

That ended the one-sided conversation, Sanders and his sergeant sitting patiently in their little lair waiting for the rest of the men to come.

With the morning arrived a detachment of Houssas under Sergeant Ahmed, following the trail Sanders had followed. There were four dead men to be buried—including him who had stood on guard at the edge of the swamp.

There was a white-faced girl to be guarded back across the swamp to the seclusion of the forest, and with her went the women of the outlaws' village.

Fembeni and his four companions stood up for judgment.

"One only thing I would ask you, Fembeni," said Sanders, "and that is this: you are by some account a Christian. Do you practise this magic, or are you for the ju-jus and gods of your fathers?"

"Lord," said Fembeni eagerly, "I am a Christian in all ways. Remember this, master, I am of your faith."

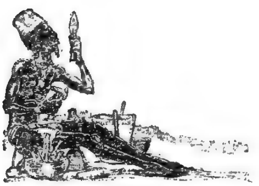
Sanders, with his lips parted, and his eyes narrowed, looked at the man.

"Then it is proper that I should give you time to say your prayers," he said. "Abiboo, we hang this man last."

"I see you are a devil," said Fembeni. "Otherwise you would not follow us in the night with none to show you the way. Now I tell you, Sandi, that I am no Christian, for all God-folk are foolish save you, and I know you are no God-man. Therefore, if I am to hang, let me hang with the rest."

Sanders nodded.

Another adventure of incomparable Sanders will appear in March



The Maker of Spears

So They Say

J. W. Scott

James J. Davis:
Secretary of Labor

"Today . . . the average American is better nourished than was the wealthiest nobleman 300 years ago."

Henry F. Pringle:
replying to "The Mentor's" query, "Which would you rather have—a son or a daughter?"

"One of the many reasons for preferring daughters to sons is the novelty of having a laboratory specimen of the new woman in one's home."

Premier André Tardieu:
eulogizing the dead "Tiger of France"

"M. Clemenceau epitomized in his personality two great French moral forces, the two passions that have controlled and dominated our history: national independence and democratic liberty."

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle:
scientist, and creator of Sherlock Holmes

"Golf originated in Holland. I have an old tile showing a broad-hatted Dutchman in exaggerated breeches dancing about, club in hand, with the legend: 'Verbunkert! Dam!'"

Anne O'Hare McCormick:
newspaperwoman, hears the Congressional investigators investigate, and reports to the N. Y. "Times"

"Senator Caraway is credited with the sharpest tongue in the Senate. His Arkansas drawl is rather like the drone of a wasp slowly circling its victim before it stings. . . . His job seems to be to worry the witnesses before Senator Walsh crushes them. . . . If Senator Borah asks a question, he asks it so gently that the witness is apt to relax at the tone before the import shocks and withers him. The Borah interrogation resembles the Adriatic wind of the same name, the bora, which tears out of a calm, velvety sky and sinks a ship."

Professor Robert E. Rogers:
of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, recommends illiteracy for many

"A great many people—perfectly honest, useful, intelligent, and successful—never receive from the printed page anything which helps them to live more intelligently."

Winston Churchill:
former Chancellor of the Exchequer of Great Britain

"No folly is more costly than the folly of intolerant idealism. Follies which tend toward vice encounter at every stage, in free and healthy communities, enormous checks and corrections from the inherent goodness and sanity of human nature; but follies sustained by lofty ideals go far, and set up strange and sinister reactions."

Marie Duggan:
Bureau of Educational Service, Teachers' College, New York

"We must remove from the nursery and the kindergarten those utterly ridiculous fairy tales in which animals and birds are endowed with human qualities and talk like human beings."

James Branch Cabell:
author

"Two books—Hans Christian Andersen's *Fairy Tales* and Ralston's *Russian Fairy Tales*—have remained almost my favorite reading."

Leopold Stokowski:
orchestra conductor, objects to the "barbaric" custom of hand-clapping

"This strange beating together of hands has no meaning. To me it is very disturbing."

Dr. Eduard Benes:
Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia

"To make peace in Europe possible, the last representative of the pre-war generation must die and take his pre-war mentality into the grave with him."

KUNI MATSUO:
Japanese editor, has a case against the film censors of Japan

"Our censors detest persons who are too happy in love; they are cruel with passionate lovers, and they mercilessly cut the love scenes, despite the fact that the Japanese public is highly interested in them."

ROBERT HERRICK:
novelist

"Dickens peopled London with his imaginative creations, as Balzac did all France. Today in the morning's newspaper appear such rich types as Shearer, Grundy, Senator Bingham, Fall, Doheny; the Lindbergh epos and the Sacco-Vanzetti tragedy, Gastonia, *et al.*—so many, so rich in imaginative implications! Here is the raw material of great novels which each reader must create for himself, because as yet we have no craftsmen sufficiently endowed to fuse, refine, and transform it into enduring art."

"S. S. VAN DINE":
writer of thrillers

"For myself, intellect is the most intimate thing in the world. I dare to show it only before lifelong friends."

W. B. BURRUSS:
New York sales counselor

"The stock market is controlled by people who are largely temperamental."

OTTO H. KAHN:
financier and art patron

"I measure my words when I say that not the most profitable transaction of my business career has brought me results comparable in value . . . to those which I derived from the 'investment' of hearing, in my early youth, Beethoven's 'Fifth Symphony,' or of seeing Botticelli's 'Primavera,' or of reading the classics of various nations."

BERTRAND RUSSELL:
English writer and lecturer

"In America law and custom alike are based upon the dreams of spinsters."

WILLIAM BOLITHO:
newspaper writer and author of a present "best seller"

"A gambler, to my mind . . . is nothing but a man who makes his living out of hopes."

PROFESSOR PHILIP W. L. COX:
of New York University

"We know too little of the relation between school success and life success to justify our being very positive in our school requirements."

GEORGE H. COMBS, JR.:
ex-Congressman, considers the derogatory comments made about the congressmen who employ women secretaries

"After a careful survey of the secretaries I must disappointedly brand these rumors as untruths. It is apparent that most of the secretaries were the carefully considered choices of the representatives' wives, who have done a canny job of picking."

"GENE" TUNNEY:
ex-champion, returns from his honeymoon abroad, and admits meeting a conqueror

" . . . The seas got rough, the skies gloomy, and I assumed a horizontal position in which I remained quite cold for the count of four days."

GILBERT SELDES:
critic and essayist

"It is a notorious thing about cranks that they firmly believe in the single object of their passion. They think that if everyone were to collect stamps, capital and labor would grow to love each other; or if everyone were to eat vegetables, wars would end; or if everyone were to sing community songs, theft would disappear."

HOWARD J. SAVAGE:
of the Carnegie Foundation

"No true friend of American sport can be easy in his mind when he reflects that, the country over, one college athlete in seven is probably subsidized."

DR. HENRY SLOANE COFFIN:
president of the Union Theological Seminary, New York

"An education which does not also stimulate our appreciations is tragically one-sided. A cultured mind not only appraises judiciously, but also delights in things true, just, lovely, and honorable."

DR. SIMON FLEXNER:
director of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, New York

"Every drug that produces any effect whatever is a poison. It may be a poison to the cells of the body, and then it is a danger. If it can be made to be a poison to the parasites which attack the body, leaving the cells practically unaffected, then it is a great triumph for practical medicine."

WILL DURANT:
writer and philosopher

"Apartment houses prosper because they provide all that one now expects of a residence—a place to sleep."

Three Wise Men

America's foremost humorist tells how he came to write one of his best stories:

Drawing by Tony Sarg

It so happens *that "Three Wise Men of the East Side" has a history different from the history of any other story that I ever wrote.*

I dreamed it. *Often in my dreams there come to me things which, in my sleep or half-waking, I tell myself should form material for yarns. But always—except in this one lone instance—I find, on completely awakening, that the dream abides in my mind only as a confused and jumbled-together nothingness—a medley of loose ends and vague meaningless memories. Either that, or the entire vision has entirely vanished, leaving me wondering what 'twas all about anyhow.*

But one night *I sat up in bed, clutching a complete and coherent narrative, and to myself I said: "By gosh! here at last is a story!" It never had happened before: it never has happened since, but there it was—a plot fully ramified, a setting, even the names of at least two of the principal characters. I'd dreamed them out, too.*

In the morning *the yarn still was vivid and bright before my mental idea. I thought back, trying to recall whether any association of ideas, any fact, any fancy, any sub-conscious mulling-over of themes had set this firecracker off inside my brain. But it was no use. So far as I could figure, the story had been born, full-grown with no prior co-ordination—or, should I say, gestation?—on my part. It was my child, all right enough, but for once the labor pains had been averted.*

So while *it still was fresh, I sat down that same day, putting aside another job on hand, and wrote it out. I added just one touch to it—the twist embodied in the concluding paragraph, that was my sole contribution, out of my imagination, to the story. All the rest was a gift.*

I was able *to finish the story in considerably less time than ordinarily I take. It was as though I were a reporter, setting down something he had seen or heard, rather than a fictionist engaged in what some people call creative writing.*

The Story:

While he was in the death-house Tony Scarra did a lot of thinking. You couldn't imagine a better place for thinking; it goes on practically all the time there, and intensively. But no matter where the thoughts range, and no matter what elements enter into them—hope or despair, rebellion or resignation, or whatever—sooner or later they fly back, like dark homing pigeons, to a small iron door opening upon a room in which, bolted to the floor, there is a chair with straps dangling from its arms and from its legs and its head-rest—in short, the Chair. This picture is the beginning and the end of all the thinking that is done in the death-house.

Such were the facts with regard to Tony Scarra. As nearly as might be judged, he felt no remorse for the murdering which had brought him to his present trapped estate. But he did have a deep regret for the entanglement of circumstances responsible for his capture and conviction. And constantly he had a profound sense of injustice. It seemed to him that in his case the law had been most terribly unreasonable. Statistics showed that for every seventy-four homicides committed in this state only one person actually went to the Chair. He'd read that in a paper during the trial. It had been of some comfort to him. Now he brooded on these figures. Over and over and over again, brooding on them, he asked himself about it.

Why should he have to be the unlucky one of seventy-four? Was it fair to let seventy-three other guys go free or let them off with prison sentences, and then shoot the whole works to him? Was that a square deal? Why did it have to be that way, anyhow? What was the sense of it? Why pick on him? Why must he go through with it? Why—that was just it—why? The question-marks were so many sharp fishhooks all pricking down into his brain and hanging on.

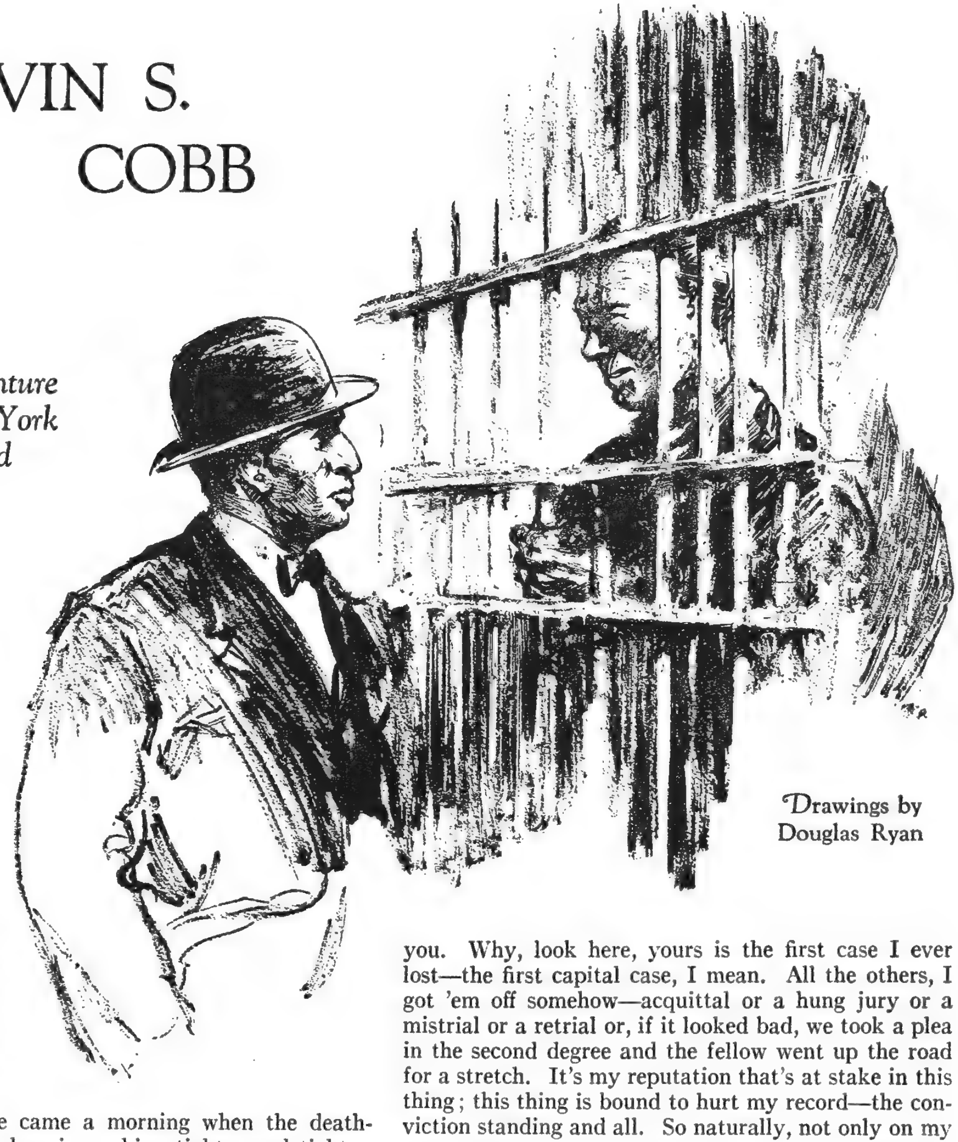
His calling had made a sort of fatalist out of Tony Scarra. His present position was in a fair way to make a sort of anarchist out of him.

All the way through, his lawyer kept trying to explain to him, touching on the lamentable rule of averages. He was not concerned with averages, though. He was concerned with the great central idea of saving

# of the East Side

By IRVIN S. COBB

A grim adventure of the New York underworld



"When they come to take me out to be juiced in that Chair . . . then out goes Tony, laughing in their faces. . . ."

Drawings by
Douglas Ryan

his life. To that extent his mind had become a lop-sided mind. Its slants all ran the same way, like shingles on a roof that slopes.

At length there came a morning when the death-house seemed to close in on him, tighter and tighter. It no longer was a steel box to enclose him; it became a steel vise and pinched him. This Scarra was not what you would call an emotional animal, nor a particularly imaginative one. Even so, and suddenly, he saw those bolt-heads in the ironwork as staring, unmerciful eyes all vigilantly cocked to see how he took the news. And his thinking, instead of being scattered, now came to a focus.

"I'm just as sore about this as you are, Tony," the lawyer said. "It hurts me almost as much as it hurts you. Why, look here, yours is the first case I ever lost—the first capital case, I mean. All the others, I got 'em off somehow—acquittal or a hung jury or a mistrial or a retrial or, if it looked bad, we took a plea in the second degree and the fellow went up the road for a stretch. It's my reputation that's at stake in this thing; this thing is bound to hurt my record—the conviction standing and all. So naturally, not only on my own account but on yours, I've done everything I could—claiming reversible errors, and taking an appeal, and now this last scheme of asking the judges to reopen the case on the ground of newly discovered evidence. We've fought it along with stays and delays for nearly eight months now, going all the way up to the highest court in the state, and here today I have to come and tell you we've been turned down there. It's hard on me, don't forget that, Tony. It'll hurt me in New York. You know what your crowd call me there—the Technicality Kid."

"You was recommended to me as one swell mouthpiece, and I sent for you and you came up and I hired you," answered Scarra in a recapitulation of vain grievances, "and you took my jack and you kept on taking it till you milked me clean, pretty near it, and now you stand there and tell me you're through!"

"No, I'm not through, either," the lawyer made haste to say. "There's still the chance the governor might commute the sentence. You know how often that happens—men being reprieved right at the very last minute, as you might say. Oh, I'm going to the governor next. We've still got nearly a month left, Tony, and a lot could happen in a month."

"Swell chance I've got with this governor, and you know it. He's a politician, ain't he? Can't you see these here rube papers riding him if he should let off the 'Big City Gunman'? Ain't that their gentlest name for me? No, you quit stalling and listen to me a minute."

There was a tight iron grill between them; they talked with each other through the meshes, and as they talked a keeper watched them, keeping beyond earshot, though. Even in the death-house the sanctity of the professional relation as between a convicted man and his legal adviser was preserved. So the sentry must watch, but he might not listen; the meeting partook of the nature of a confessional. All the same, Scarra followed the quite unnecessary precaution of sinking his voice before saying what next he had to say. Saying it, he kept shifting his eyes away from Attorney Finburg's face to look this way and that—first this way, toward the heedful but unhearing keeper, then that way toward the part of the building where, behind sound-proof walls, the Chair stood.

"Finburg," he whispered, "I ain't going to let these guys cook me. I'm going to beat their game yet—and you're going to help me." He twisted his mouth into the stiffened shape of a grin; the embalmed corpse of a grin. "Get that? You're going to help me."

Counselor Finburg had eloquent shoulders. Often in debate he used those shoulders of his to help out his pleading hands. He lifted both of them in a shrug of confessed confidence. Nevertheless, his expression invited further confidences. It was as much as to say that this was a poor unfortunate friend who, having a delusion, must he humored in it.

"Don't start that stuff with me," went on Scarra, correctly interpreting the look; "not till you've heard what I got to tell you. Finburg, if I got to croak, I got to croak, that's all. I took plenty chances in my time of getting bumped off, and I've seen more'n one guy getting his—what I mean, more'n one besides that hick cop that I fixed his clock for him. If it hadn't been for him I wouldn't been here. But that ain't the thing. The thing is that I ain't going to let 'em make cold meat out of me in that kitchen of theirs out there. They ain't going to fry me on one side like an egg. I'll beat 'em to it, that's all. I couldn't stand it, that's all."

"They say it's absolutely—you know"— Mr. Finburg's lips were reluctant to form the word—"well, painless—absolutely—and, of course, instantaneous."

"Who says so? A bunch of wise-cracking doctors, that's who. What do they know about it? Any of them ever try to find out? Finburg, I had a brother, and he knew about electricity—was a lineman for a high-tension power company. I've heard him tell about being caught in them currents, heard him tell what other guys went through that took a big jolt of the juice. The first shock don't always put a guy out. He may look to be dead, but he ain't—he's stuck there waiting for the next shot—waiting, waiting. Well, not for me—I'm going to do my own croaking—with a little help from outside. That's where you figure in."

Involuntarily, Finburg made as if to back away. His body shrank back, but his feet rooted him fast. A fascination held him.

"You ain't going to lose anything by it," maintained the caged man, pressing his point. "You're going to make by it."

"No, no, no!" Finburg strove to make his dissent emphatic. "Oh, no, Scarra, I'd like to do you any favor in my power, but I couldn't do that. Why, man, it's against the law. It's conniving at a suicide. It makes the man who does it an accessory."

"Swell law that wants to croak a poor guy and yet calls it a crime if somebody helps him croak himself!" commented Scarra. "Still, I know about that part of it already. What if I tell you you ain't running any risk? And what if you clean up on the deal yourself? You've been knocking holes in the law ever since you got your license. Why're you weakening now?"

"But—but if you're determined to go this way, why not use something in your cell—some utensil, say?" suggested the nervous Finburg. Already he felt guilty. His cautious voice had a guilty quaver in it.

"With them bringing me my grub already cut up and only a spoon to eat it with—huh!" The murderer grunted. "Why, even the toothbrush they gave me has got a limber handle on it. And if they let me have a lead-pencil to write with, there's a keeper standing alongside to see I don't try to shove the sharp end of it down my throat. Don't they search my coop, every little while? You know they do. Anyhow, I ain't craving to make a messy job of it and probably be caught before it's done, besides. I'm going clean and I'm going quick. What I want is just a nice little jolt of this here cyanide of potassium. You know about that stuff? You swallow it and it's all over in a minute. That's what I want—one little shot of that cyanide stuff. I ain't going to take it till the last hope's gone—a miracle might happen with that governor yet. But when they come to take me out to be juiced in that chair, why, down goes the little pill and out goes Tony, laughing in their foolish faces. I ain't scared to go my way, you understand, but"—he sucked in his breath—"but I'm scared to go their way, and I might as well admit it."

Still on the defensive and the negative, Finburg had been shaking his head through this, but his next speech belied his attitude. Being rent between two crossed emotions—a sinking fear for his own safety and a climbing, growing avarice, he said in a soft, wheedling tone: "You mentioned just now about my making something out of—this? Not that I'd even consider such a dangerous proposition," he added hastily. "I—I just wanted to know what you had on your mind, that's all?"

"I thought that'd interest you! Listen, Finburg. All along, I've been holding out on you. I been keeping an ace in the hole in case we should lose out on the appeal. You thought you'd taken the last cent of fall-money I could dig up for fighting my case for me, didn't you? Well, kid, you guessed wrong there. You remember the big Bergen Trust Company hold-up down in New Jersey early last spring, don't you?"

"Yes." Finburg's jaws relaxed the least bit to let a greedy tongue lick out.

"Then you remember, probably, that quite a chunk of negotiable securities—bonds and things—wasn't never recovered?"

"Yes, I recall." Finburg suggested a furtive jackal, tense with a mounting hunger and smelling afar off a bait of rich but forbidden food.

"And that the trust company people offered a reward of ten thousand for the return of that stuff and no questions asked?"

"Yes, go on."

"Well, Finburg, you're smart, but here's something you never knew before. I was in on that hold-up—I engineered it. And inside of three weeks afterwards, while I was waiting for the squawk over that job to die down, I came up here and got in this jam and had to plug this cop and they nailed me. But, Finburg, I've got a safe-deposit box in a bank on Third Avenue, and I've got a key to it stuck away in another place where a pal's keeping it for me—a pal I can trust. I'll leave you guess what's in that safe-deposit box. Or, if you want me to, I'll tell——"

"No, don't tell me—that would be illegal," said the lawyer very uneasily and yet very eagerly. "It would be more regular, you understand, if I didn't actually have knowledge of what the contents were—that is, beforehand. I've been double-crossed before by some of you hard-boiled people. There was the time when I almost worked my head off defending Roxie McGill and her mob for shoving phony money, and every time I think of how that McGill skirt slipped it over on me, when it came time to settle up"—he winced on what plainly was a most painful recollection—"well, it's made me careful, Tony, awfully careful. Not that I'm doubting you, understand. If a man can't trust a——" He broke off, looking, for him, a trifle embarrassed.

"Say it!" prompted Scarra grimly. "If you can't trust a dying man you can't trust nobody—that's what you had in your mind, wasn't it? Well, I'm as good as dead right now, and you won't never regret it, playing my game. It could be fixed up, according to law, couldn't it, like a will, that me not having any kinfolks, I was leaving you what was in that safe-deposit box on account of you having been my lawyer, and having worked so hard for me?"

"Oh, yes, I'd know how to phrase the instrument properly. There'd be no trouble about that, none whatever, Tony."

"All right, then, you fix up the paper and I'll sign it right here any day it's ready. And I'll give you a written order on that pal of mine for the key, telling him to hand it over to you the day after I'm gone. You ain't got a thing to worry about. And in payment all you got to do for me is just the one little favor of getting that little pill made up and——"

"I'M TELLING YOU there's entirely too much risk." interrupted Finburg, in a timorous sweat of almost overpowering temptation, but still clinging to safety. "I wouldn't dare risk trying to slip you poison, Tony—I couldn't."

"Nobody's asking you to."

"What? What's that you're saying, Tony?" The lawyer shoved his peaked nose between two wattles of the steel.

"I say, nobody's asking you to. Knowing you, I've doped out that part of it so you won't have to take a chance. Listen, Finburg—there's a guard here named Isgrid—a Swede or something. And he comes from down on the East Side, the same as you and me. I've been working on him. We've got friendly. Maybe him and me both having been born on the same block over there beyond the Bowery was what made him sort of mushy towards me—he's one of those big thick slobs. But it ain't for friendship only that he's willing to help. He wants his bit out of it. He's aiming to quit this job he's got here, and he wants to take a piece of money with him when he quits. Now, here's what he tells me: He'll be on the death-watch on me. That last night he'll slip me the pill, see? Nobody ain't going to suspect him, he says, and even if anybody does, they ain't going to be able to hang it on him, let alone get you mixed in with the plant."

"I suppose I'll have to see this man," conceded Finburg; "not that that means I'm commiting myself to this undertaking."

"I thought of that too. Day after tomorrow is Sunday, and Sunday is his day off. He'll run down to New York and meet you in your office or at your flat, and you can size him up and talk it over with him."

"It can't do any harm to see the man, I suppose." It was plain that the lawyer was convincing himself. "Tell him—only, mind you, this is just an accommodation to you—tell him the address of my rooms and tell him to be there at ten o'clock."

"One thing more," stated the killer. "Isgrid wants one grand for his cut."

"One grand—a thousand dollars!"

"That's his lowest price. I had to work on him to cut it down to that. And, Finburg, you'll have to dig up the thou'. He wants it in advance, see? You can pay yourself back—afterwards. That's up to you."

"That makes it still more complicated," lamented the wavering Finburg. "I don't know—I don't know." Figuratively he wrung his hands in an anguish born of desire and doubt.

"Well, I'll give you till over Sunday to make up your mind, then," said Scarra, he secretly being well content with the progress that had been made. "If by Monday you've decided to go through with your share of the deal, you can come back here and bring that will with you and I'll sign it. If you don't show up on Monday I'll know you're too chicken-hearted for your own good. Remember this, though, Finburg—one way or another I'm going to get that pill. If you don't want to help, that's your lookout—you'll only be kissing good-by to what's down in them safe-deposit vaults on Third Avenue. And if you do—well, I guess you're wise enough to protect yourself at every angle. It's easy pickings for you, Finburg—easy pickings. So think it over before you decide to say no. Well, so long, see you Monday."

He fell back from the grating and to the keeper at the farther end of the corridor motioned to indicate that his interview with his counsel was ended and that he was ready to be returned to his cell.

MONDAY MORNING, good and early, Mr. Finburg was back again. His mind had been made up for many hours. In fact it was made up before he left on Friday afternoon. Only, at the time, he had not cared to say so or to look so. To wear a mask was one part of Mr. Finburg's professional attitude. To do things deviously was another. For him, always, the longest way round was the shortest way across. His mind was a maze of detours, excepting when he was collecting his retainers or pressing for his principal fees. Then he could be straightforward enough to satisfy anybody. The practice of the criminal law does this to some of its practitioners.

It was because of this trait of Mr. Finburg's that certain preliminary steps in the working-out of his share in the plot were elaborated and made intricate. Since Friday evening, when his train landed him at the Grand Central, he had been a reasonably busy young man. From the station he went directly to the Public Library and there, at a table well apart from any other reader, he consulted a work on toxicology, with particular reference to the effects of the more deadly poisons. Before midnight he was in touch with a chemist of his acquaintance who served as laboratory sharp and chief mixer for a bootlegging combine specializing in synthetic goods with bogus labels on them. His real purpose in this inquiry was, of course, carefully cloaked; the explanation he gave—it referred to experiments which a purely supposititious client was making with precious metals—apparently satisfied the expert, who gave information fully.

By virtue of a finely involved ramification of underworld connections, Mr. Finburg was enabled next to operate through agents. Three separate individuals figured in the transaction. But no one of the three beheld more than his particular link in a winding chain, and only one of the three had direct dealings with the principal, and this one remained in complete ignorance of what really was afoot. All he knew, all he cared to know, was that, having been dispatched on a mission which seemed to start nowhere and lead nowhere, he had performed what was expected of him and had been paid for it and was through. By such deft windings in and out, Mr. Finburg satisfied himself the trail was so broken that no investigator ever could piece it together. There were too many footprints in the trace; and too many of them pointing in seemingly opposite and contrary directions.

He was quite ready for the man Isgrid when that person came to his apartment on Sunday morning. Whether Isgrid studied Finburg is of no consequence to this narrative, but we may be quite assured that Finburg studied Isgrid, seeing the latter as a stolid, dull person, probably of Scandinavian ancestry and undoubtedly of a cheap order of mentality. About Isgrid as interpreted by Finburg, there was nothing to suggest any personal initiative. He appeared close-mouthed and secretive, though—in short, a man who, being committed to a venture, would go through it with a sort of intent and whole-hearted determination. This greatly pleased the little lawyer. For the rôle of an unthinking middleman Isgrid seemed an admirable choice. He had such a dependable dumb look about him. Nevertheless, it suited Mr. Finburg's book that his conspirings with this man should be marked by crafty play-acting. There sat the two of them, entirely alone, yet Mr. Finburg behaved as though a cloud of witnesses hovered to menace him.

He asked Isgrid various questions—leading questions, they would be called in court—but so phrased that they might pass for the most unsuspicious of inquiries. Then, being well satisfied by the results of such cross-examination, the lawyer came to business.

"Look here," he said, pointing, "on this table is a little box with the lid off. See it? Well, in it are twelve five-grain capsules same as you'd get from any drug-store if you had a touch of grippe and the doctor gave you a prescription to be filled. Between ourselves we'll just say it is a grippe cure that we've got here. Well, one of these capsules is stronger than the others are. If I'm not mistaken, it's this one here"—his finger pointed again—"the last one in the bottom row, the one with a little spot of red ink on it. It's marked that way so a fellow will be wised up to handling it pretty carefully.

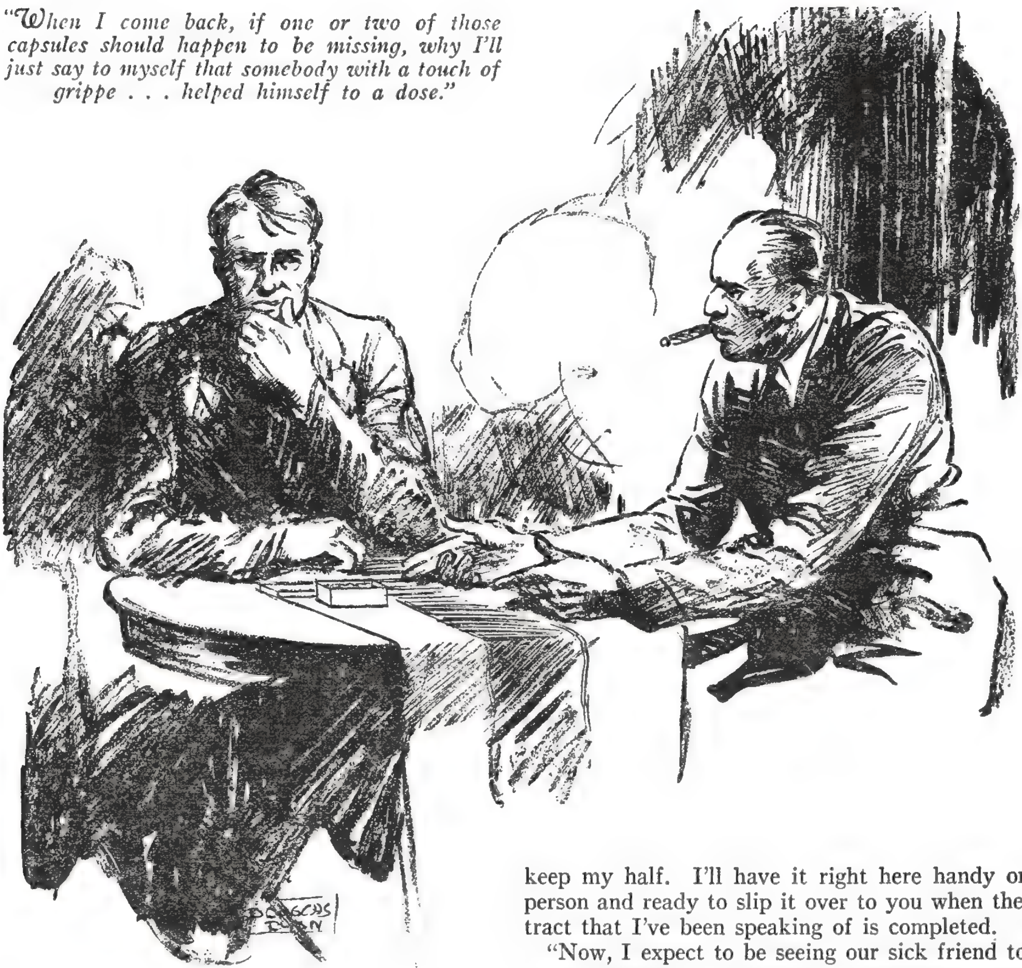
"Now then, I'm going into the next room. I've got a wall safe there where I keep some of my private papers and other valuables, including money. I'm going to get a bill—a nice new United State Treasury certificate for one thousand dollars—out of my safe. It may take me two or three minutes to work the combination and find the bill. When I come back, if one or two of those capsules should happen to be missing, why I'll just say to myself that somebody with a touch of grippe, or somebody who's got a friend laid up somewhere with the grippe, saw this medicine here and helped himself to a dose or so without saying anything about it. It won't stick in my mind; what difference does a measly little drug-store pill or two mean to me or to anybody else, for that matter? Inside of ten minutes I'll have forgotten all about it.

"Make yourself at home—I'll be back in a jiffy."

HE ENTERED the inner room of the two-room flat, closing and snapping shut the connecting door behind him. When he came back, which was quite soon, he glanced at the open box. The twelfth capsule, that one which was red-dotted, and one neighboring capsule had disappeared. Isgrid was sitting where he had been seated before Finburg's temporary withdrawal.

"See this?" resumed Finburg, and he held up what he was holding in his hands. "It's a nice slick new one that's never been in circulation. Well, I've about

"When I come back, if one or two of those capsules should happen to be missing, why I'll just say to myself that somebody with a touch of grippe . . . helped himself to a dose."



made up my mind to slip this bill to you. You've been kind to a party that's in trouble—a party that I've had considerable dealings with. He's grateful, and naturally I'm grateful, too. As I understand it, you're going to keep on being good to this party. He's in a bad way—may not live very long, in fact—and we'll both appreciate any little attentions you might continue to show him. But this is a hard world—people get careless sometimes; you can't always depend on them. Not knocking you or anything, but still I'd like to make certain that you won't go back on any little promise you might have made to him lately. You get me, I think—just a precaution on my part. See what I'm going to do next?"

From his desk he took up a pair of scissors and with one swift clip of their blades sheared the yellow-back squarely in two across the middle. Isgrid said nothing to this, but kept eying him intently.

"Now, then, I put one-half of this bill into my pocket," proceeded Finburg; "and the other half I'm handing over to you"—doing so. "Separated this way, these halves are no use to anybody—none to me, none to you. But paste them together again and you've got a thousand-dollar bill that's just as good as it ever was. For the time being, you keep your half and I'll keep my half. I'll have it right here handy on my person and ready to slip it over to you when the contract that I've been speaking of is completed.

"Now, I expect to be seeing our sick friend tomorrow. Tonight I'll be fixing up a document or two for him to sign, and I'm going to take them up to where he is in the morning. I'll tell him of this little arrangement between us, and I'm certain he'll endorse it. I may not see him again until the twenty-seventh of this month." He dwelt meaningly upon the date. "It looks as though he couldn't last much longer than that—not more than a few hours. And on the twenty-seventh, if the prospects are that he'll pass out within the next twenty-four hours—which, as I say, is the present outlook—I'll pay him a farewell visit. If everything was worked out right—if you've done him any little last favor that he's counting on—why, he'll tip me the word while we're alone together. You won't have to wait much longer than that for what's coming to you. Just as soon as he gives me the word I'll meet you in some private corner that we'll decide on, and hand you over the other half of your bill. Is everything understood—everything agreeable to you?"

Still mute, Isgrid nodded. They shook hands on it after Isgrid had named a suitable place for their rendezvous on the twenty-seventh; then the silent caller took himself away. All told, he had not contributed a hundred words, counting in grunts as words, to the dialogue.

Left alone, Mr. Finburg mentally hugged himself before he set to the task of drawing up the papers for his client's signature. This same Sunday he decided not to go to the governor of that near-by state with any futile plea for executive clemency. He'd tell Scarra, of course, that he was going; would pretend he had gone. But what was the use of a man wasting his breath on a quest so absolutely hopeless? He salved his conscience—or the place where his conscience had been before he wore it out—with this reflection, and by an effort of the will put from him any prolonged consideration of the real underlying reason. It resolved itself in this: Why should a man trifle with his luck? With Scarra wiped out—and certainly Scarra deserved wiping out, if ever a red-handed brute did—the ends of justice would be satisfied and the case might serve as a warning to other criminals. But if that governor should turn mush-headed and withhold from Scarra his just punishment, where would Scarra's lawyer be? He'd be missing a delectable chunk of jack by a hair—that's where he would be.

Let the law take its course!

The law did. It took its racking course at quarter past one o'clock on the morning of the twenty-eighth.

Those who kept ward on Tony Scarra, considering him as scientists might consider an inoculated guinea-pig waiting patiently for this or that expected symptom of organic disorder to show itself, marveled more and more as the night wore on at the bearing of the condemned man. His, they dispassionately decided among themselves, was not the rehearsed but transparent bravado of the ordinary thug. That sort of thing they had observed before; they could bear testimony that very often toward the finish this make-believe fortitude melted beneath the lifting floods of a mortal terror and a mortal anguish, so that the subject lost the use of his members and the smoothness of his tongue, and babbled wild prayers and flapped with his legs and must be half-dragged, half-borne along on that first, last, short journey of his through the iron door to what awaited him beyond.

Or, fifty-fifty, it might be that imminent dread acted upon him as a merciful drug which soothed him into a sort of obedient coma wherein he yielded with a pitiful docility to the wishes of his executioners and mechanically did as they bid him, and went forth from his cell meek as a lamb, thereby simplifying and easing for them their not altogether agreeable duties. These experienced observers had come to count on one or the other of these manifestations. In Scarra neither of them was developed.

He seemed defiantly insulated against collapse by some indefinable power derived from within; it was as though a hidden secret reservoir of strength sustained him. He gibed the death-watch and he made a joke of the prison chaplain coming in the face of repeated rebuffs to offer the sustaining comfort of his Gospels. He betrayed no signs whatsoever of weakening—and this, to those who officiated at those offices, seemed most remarkable of all—when they clipped the hair off the top of his skull for the pad of the electrodes and again, later in the evening, when they brought him the black trousers with the left leg split up the inside seam.

All at once, though, at the beginning of the second hour after midnight, when the witnesses were assembled and waiting in the lethal chamber, his jaunty confidence—if so, for lack of a better description, it might be termed—drained from him in a single gush. He had called, a minute or two before, for a drink of water, complaining of a parched throat. A filled cup was brought to him. Sitting on a stool in his cell he turned his back upon the bringer and took the draught down at a gulp, then rose and stood looking through the bars at the keepers, with a mocking, puzzling grin on his lips and over all his face and in his eyes a look of expectancy. The grin vanished, the look changed to one of enormous bewilderment, then to one of the intensest chagrin, and next he was mouthing with shocking vile words toward the eternity waiting for him. He resisted them when they went in then to fetch him out, and fought with them and screamed out and altogether upset the decorum of the death-house, so that the surviving inmates became excessively nervous and unhappy.

He did not curse those whose task it was now to subdue and, if possible, to calm him. He cursed somebody or other—person or persons unknown—for having deceived him in a vital matter, crying out that he had been imposed on, that he had been double-crossed. He raved of a pill—whatever that might mean—but so frightful a state was he in, so nearly incoherent in his frenzy of rage and distress and disappointment, that the meaning of what he spoke was swallowed up and lost.

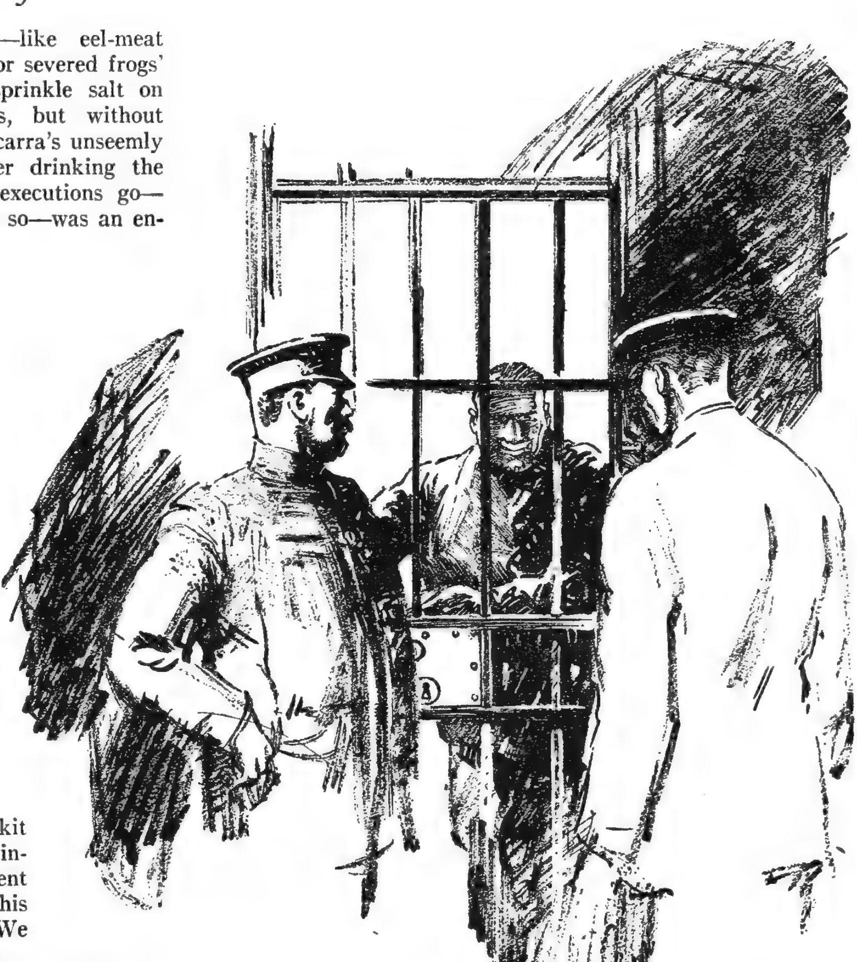
Anyhow, his sweating handlers had no time to listen. Their task was to muffle his blasphemy and get him to the chair, which they did. Practically, they had to gag him with their hands, and one of the men had a finger bitten to the bone.

Since he continued to struggle in the presence of the audience, the proceedings from this point on were hurried along more than is common. His last understandable words, coming from beneath the mask clamped over the upper part of his distorted face, had reference to this mysterious double-crossing of which plainly, even in that extremity, he regarded himself the victim, and on which, as was equally plain, his final bitter thoughts dwelt. The jolt of the current cut him off in a panted, choking mid-speech, and the jaw dropped and the body strained up against the stout breast-harness, and the breath wheezed and rasped out across the teeth and past the lips, which instantly had turned purple, and there was a lesser sound, a curious hissing, whispering, slightly unpleasant sound as though the life were so eager to escape from this flesh that it came bursting through the pores of the darkening skin. Also, there was a wisp of rising blue smoke and a faint, a very faint smell of something burning. There nearly always is; a feature which apparently cannot be avoided. Still, after all, that's but a detail.

For absolute certainty of result, they gave Scarra's body a second shock, and the physicians present observed with interest how certain of the muscles, notably certain of the neck muscles, twitched in response to the throb and flow of the fluid through the tissues. But of course the man was dead. It merely was a simple galvanic reaction—like eel-meat twisting on a hot griddle, or severed frogs' legs jumping when you sprinkle salt on them—interesting, perhaps, but without significance. Except for Scarra's unseemly behavior immediately after drinking the water, this execution, as executions go—and they nearly always go so—was an entire success.

Conceded that as to its chief purpose the plan unaccountably had gone amiss, Mr. Finburg nevertheless felt no concern over the outcome. Privately he preferred that it should have been thus—there being no reason for any official inquiry. Happy anticipations uplifted him as, sundry legal formulas having been complied with, he went as Scarra's heir to Scarra's bank on Third Avenue and opened Scarra's safe-deposit box.

It would seem that he, also, had been double-crossed. All that the box contained was a neat small kit of burglars' tools. It was indeed a severe disappointment to Mr. Finburg, a blow to his faith in human nature. We may well feel for Finburg.



They marveled more and more as the night wore on at the bearing of the condemned man.

Of that triumvirate of East Side connivers, there remains the third and least important member, Isgrid, he who, scheming in his own protection, had played for safety by smuggling to the late Scarra not number twelve, the poisonous capsule, but number eleven, the harmless one. Let us not spend all our sympathy upon Mr. Finburg, but rather let us reserve some portion of it for Isgrid. For this one, he too suffered a grievous disappointment. It befell when, having patched the parted halves of his thousand-dollar bill, he undertook to pass it. It was refused, not because it was pasted together, but because it was counterfeit.

What Is an Actor?

Little more worth remembering occurred during the play, at the end of which Jones asked him, "Which of the players he had liked best." To this he answered, with some appearance of indignation at the question, "The king, without doubt." "Indeed, Mr. Partridge," says Mrs. Miller, "you are not of the same opinion with the town; for they are all agreed that Hamlet is acted by the best player who ever was on the stage." "He the best player!" cries Partridge, with a contemptuous sneer. "Why, I could act as well as he myself. I am sure, if I had seen a ghost, I should have looked in the very same manner, and done just as he did. And then, to be sure, in that scene, as you call it, between him and his mother, where you told me he acted so fine, why, any man—that is, any good man—that had such a mother would have done exactly the same. I know you are only joking with me; but indeed, madame, though I was never at a play in London, yet I have seen acting before in the country. The king for my money! He speaks all his words distinctly, half as loud again as the other. Anybody may see he is an actor."

Tom Jones. Henry Fielding.

Mrs. Bindle's Discovery

By
HERBERT JENKINS

On Wednesday evenings, Mrs. Bindle went to chapel to engage in the weekly temperance service. As temperance meetings always engendered in Mrs. Bindle the missionary spirit, Bindle selected Wednesday for what he called his "night out."

If he got home early, it was to encounter Mrs. Bindle's prophetic views as to the hereafter of those who spent their leisure in gin-palaces.

At first Mrs. Bindle had shown her resentment by waiting up until Bindle returned; but, as he made that return later each Wednesday, she had at last capitulated, and it became no longer necessary for him to walk the streets until two o'clock in the morning, in order to slip upstairs unchallenged as to where he expected to go when he died.

One Wednesday night, as he was on his way home, whistling "Bubbles" at the stretch of his powers, he observed the figure of a girl standing under a lamp-post, her head bent, her shoulders moving convulsively.

"'Ullo—'ullo!" he cried. Wot's the matter now?"

At Bindle's words she gave him a fleeting glance, then, turning once more to the business on hand, sobbed the louder.

"Wot's wrong, my dear?" Bindle enquired, regarding her with a puzzled expression. "'Oo's been 'urting you?"

"I'm—I'm afraid," she sobbed.

"Afraid! There ain't nothink to be afraid of when Joe Bindle's about. Wot you afraid of?"

"I'm—I'm afraid to go home," sobbed the girl.

"Afraid to go 'ome," repeated Bindle. "Why?"

"M-m-m-m-mother."

"Wot's up with 'er? She ill?"

"She—she'll kill me."

"Ferocious ole bird," he muttered. Then to the girl, " 'Ere, you didn't ought to be out at this time o' night, a young gal like you. Why, it's gettin' on for twelve. Wot's wrong with Ma?"

"She'll kill me. I darsen't go home." She looked up at Bindle, a pathetic figure, with twitching mouth and frightened eyes. Then, controlling her sobs, she told her story.

She had been to Richmond with a girl friend, and some boys had taken them for a run on their motorcycles. One of the cycles had developed engine-trouble, and, instead of being home by ten, it was half-past eleven before she got to Putney Bridge Station.

"I darsen't go home," she wailed, as she finished her story. "Mother'll kill me. She said she would, last time. I know she will," and again she began to cry, this time without any effort to shield her tear-stained face. Fear had rendered her regardless of appearances.

" 'Ere, I'll take you 'ome," cried Bindle, with the air of a man who has arrived at a mighty decision. "If Mrs. B. gets to 'ear of it, there'll be an 'ell of a row, though," he muttered.

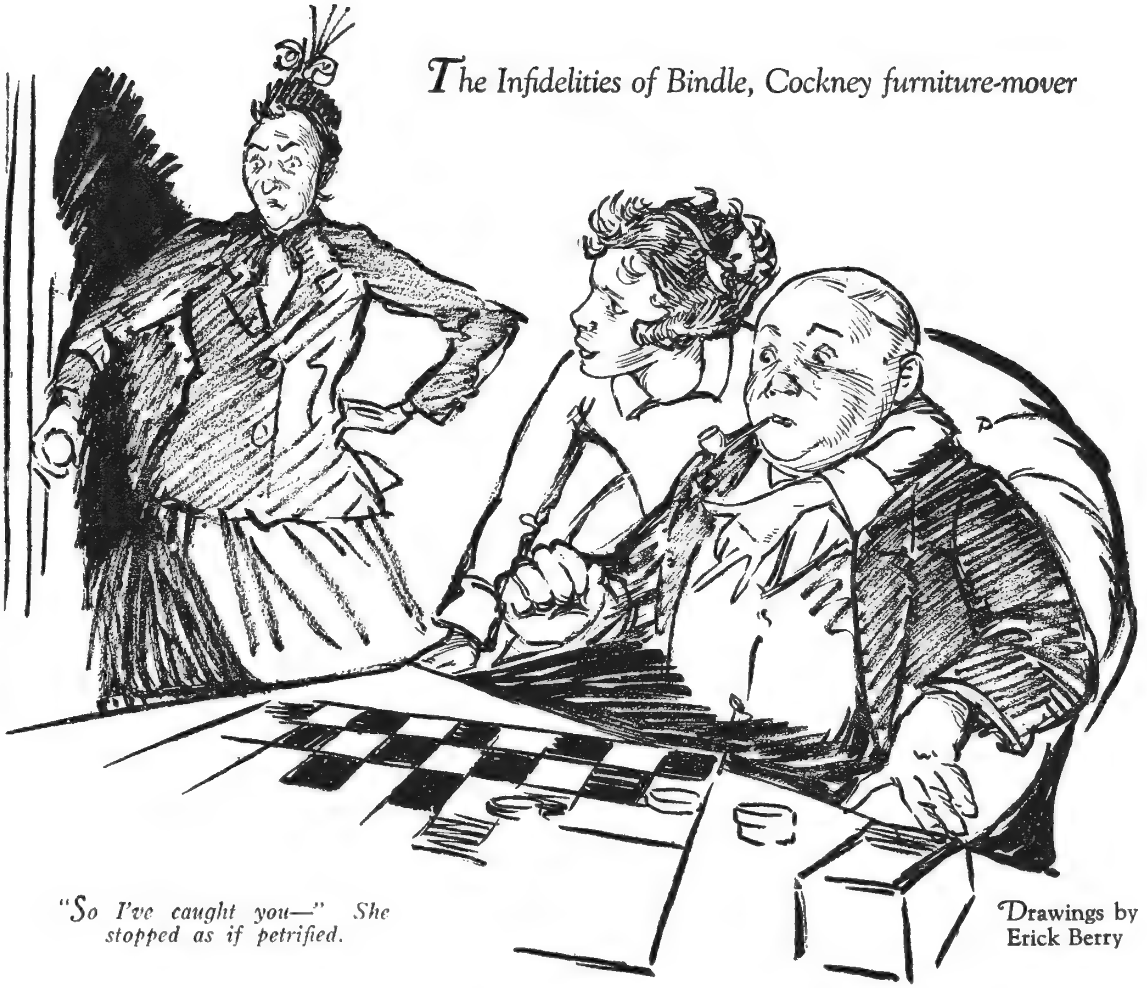
The girl appeared undecided.

"You won't let her hurt me?" she asked, with the appealing look of a frightened child.

"Well, I can't start scrappin' with your ma, my dear," he said uncertainly; "but I'll do my best. My missis is a bit of a scrapper, you see, an' I've learned 'ow to 'andle 'em. Of course, if she liked 'ymns an' salmon, it'd be sort of easier," he mused, "not that there's much chance of gettin' a tin o' salmon at this time o' night."

The girl, unaware of his habit of trading on Mrs. Bindle's fondness for tinned salmon and hymn tunes, looked at him with widened eyes.

The Infidelities of Bindle, Cockney furniture-mover



"So I've caught you—" She stopped as if petrified.

Drawings by Erick Berry

"No," he continued, "it's got to be tac' this time. 'Ere, come along, young un, we can't stay 'ere all night. Where jer live?"

She indicated with a nod the end of the street in which they stood.

"Well, 'ere goes," he cried, starting off, the girl following. As they proceeded, her steps became more and more reluctant, until at last she stopped dead.

"Wot's up now?" he inquired, looking over his shoulder.

"I darsen't go in," she said tremulously. "I d-d-darsen't."

" 'Ere, come along," cried Bindle persuasively. "Your ma can't eat you. Which 'ouse is it?"

"That one." She nodded in the direction of a gate opposite a lamp-post, fear and misery in her eyes.

"Come along, my dear. I won't let 'er 'urt you," and, taking her gently by the arm, he led her towards the gate. Here, however, the girl stopped once more and clung convulsively to the railings, half-dead with fright.

Opening the gate, Bindle walked up the short tiled path and, reaching up, grasped the knocker. As he did so, the door opened with such suddenness that he lurched forward, almost into the arms of a stout woman with a fiery face and angry eyes.

From Bindle her gaze traveled to the shrinking figure clinging to the railings.

"You old villain!" she cried, in a voice hoarse with passion, making a dive at Bindle, who, dodging nimbly, took cover behind a moth-eaten evergreen in the center of the diminutive front garden.

"You just let me catch you, keeping my gal out like this, and you old enough to be her father, too. As for you, my lady, you just wait till I get you indoors. I'll show you, coming home at this time o' night."

She made another dive at Bindle; but her bulk was against her, and he found no difficulty in evading the attack.

"What d'you mean by it?" she demanded, as she glared at him across the top of the evergreen, "and 'er not seventeen yet. For two pins I'd have you taken up."

" 'Ere, 'old 'ard, missis," cried Bindle, keeping a wary eye upon his antagonist. "I ain't wot you think. I'm a dove, that's wot I am, an' 'ere are you a-playin' chase-me-Charlie round this 'ere——"

"Wait till I get you," she shouted, drowning Bindle's protest. "I'll give you dove, keeping my gal out all hours. You just wait. I'll show you, or my name ain't Annie Brunger."

She made another dive at him; but, by a swift movement, he once more placed the diminutive evergreen between them.

"Mother!—mother!" The girl rushed forward and clung convulsively to her mother's arm. "Mother, don't!"

"You wait, my lady," cried Mrs. Brunger, shaking off her daughter's hand. "I'll settle with you when I've finished with him, the beauty. I'll show him!"

THE FRONT DOOR of the house on the right slowly opened, and a curl-papered head peeped out. Two doors away on the other side a window was raised, and a man's bald head appeared. The hounds of scandal scented blood.

"Mother!" The girl shook her mother's arm desperately. "Mother, don't! This gentleman came home with me because I was afraid."

"What's that?" Mrs. Brunger turned to her daughter, who stood with pleading eyes clutching her arm, her own fears momentarily forgotten.

"He saw me crying and said he'd come home with me, because—— Oh, mother, don't!—don't!"

Two windows on the opposite side of the way were noisily pushed up, and heads appeared.

" 'Ere, look 'ere, missis," cried Bindle, seizing his opportunity. "It's no use a-chasin' me round this 'ere gooseberry bush. I told you I ain't no lion. I come to smooth things over. A sort o' dove, you know."

"Mother!—mother!" Again the girl clutched her mother's arm, shaking it in her excitement. "I was afraid to come home, honestly I was, and—and he saw me crying, and—and said——" Sobs choked her further utterance.

"Come inside, the pair of you." Mrs. Brunger had at length become conscious of the interest of her neighbors. "Some folks never can mind their own business," she added, as a thrust at the inquisitive. Turning her back on the delinquent pair, she marched in at the door, along the short passage to the kitchen at the farther end, where the gas was burning.

Bindle followed her confidently, and stood, cap in hand, by the kitchen-table, looking about him with interest. The girl, however, remained flattened against the side of the passage, as if anxious to efface herself.

"Elsie, if you don't come in, I'll fetch you," announced the mother threateningly.

Elsie slid along the wall and round the door-post, making for the corner of the room farthest from her mother. There she stood with terrified eyes fixed upon her parent.

"Now, then, what have you two got to say for yourselves?" Mrs. Brunger looked from Bindle to her daughter, with the air of one who is quite prepared to assume the responsibilities of Providence.

"Well, it was like this 'ere," said Bindle easily. "I see 'er," he jerked his thumb in the direction of the girl, "cryin' under a lamp-post down the street, so I asks 'er wot's up."

Bindle paused, and Mrs. Brunger turned to her daughter with a look of interrogation.

"I—I——" began the girl, then she, too, stopped abruptly.

"You've been with that hussy Mabel Warnes again." There was accusation and conviction in Mrs. Brunger's tone. "Don't you deny it," she continued, although the girl made no sign of doing so. "I warned you what I'd do to you if you went out with that fast little baggage again, and I'll do it, so help me God, I will." Her voice was rising angrily.

" 'Ere, look 'ere, missis——" began Bindle.

"My name's Brunger—Mrs. Brunger," she added, to prevent any possibility of misconception. "I thought I told you once."

"You did," said Bindle cheerfully. "Now, look 'ere," he continued persuasively, "we're only young once."

Mrs. Brunger snorted disdainfully; and the look she gave her daughter caused the girl to shrink closer to the wall.

"Rare cove I was for gettin' 'ome late," remarked Bindle reminiscently.

"More shame on you," was the uncompromising retort.

"Shouldn't wonder if you was a bit late now an' again when you was a gal," he continued, looking up at Mrs. Brunger with critical appreciation—"or else the chaps didn't know wot was wot," he added.

"Two blacks don't make a white," was Mrs. Brunger's obscure comment.

"Yes; but a gal can't 'elp bein' pretty," continued Bindle, following the line of his reasoning. "Now, if you'd been like some ma's, no one wouldn't 'ave wanted to keep 'er out."

"Who are you getting at?" demanded Mrs. Brunger; but there was no displeasure in her voice.

"It's only the pretty ones wot gets kept out late," continued Bindle imperturbably, his confidence rising at the signs of a weakening defense. "Now, with a ma like you," he paused eloquently, "it was bound to 'appen. You didn't ought to be too 'ard on the gal; although, mind you," he said, turning to the culprit, "she didn't ought to go out with gals against her ma's wishes, an' she's goin' to be a good gal in future—ain't that so, my dear?"

The girl nodded her head vigorously.

"There, you see," continued Bindle, turning once more to Mrs. Brunger, whose face was showing marked signs of relaxation. "Now, if I was a young chap again," he continued, looking from mother to daughter, "well, anythink might 'appen."

"Go on with you, do." Mrs. Brunger's good humor was returning.

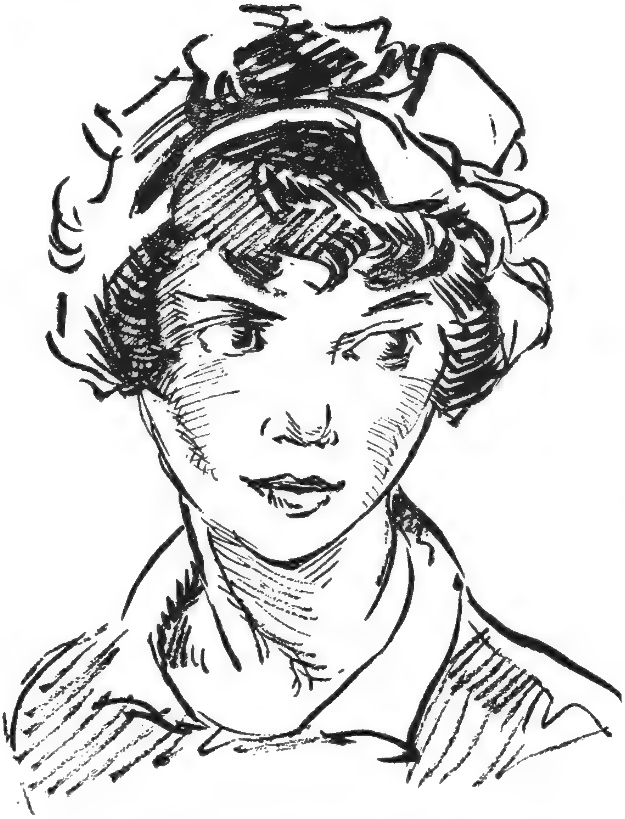
"Well, I suppose I must," said Bindle, with a grin. "It's about time I was 'opping it."

His announcement seemed to arouse the girl. Hitherto she had stood a silent witness, puzzled at the strange turn events were taking; but now she realized that her protector was about to leave her to the enemy. She started forward, and clutched Bindle by the arm.

"Don't go!—oh, don't go! I——" She stopped suddenly, and looked across at her mother.

"You ain't a-goin' to be too 'ard on 'er?" said Bindle, interpreting the look.

Mrs. Brunger looked irresolute. Her anger found its source in the mother-instinct of protection rather than in bad temper. Bindle was quick to take advantage of her indecision. He turned to the girl.



"*It's only the pretty ones wot gets kept out late.*"

"Now, you mustn't worry yer ma. She 'as enough to see to without bein' bothered by a pretty little 'ead like yours. Now, if she forgives you, will you promise 'er not to be late again an' not to go with that gal wot she don't like?"

"Oh, yes, yes! I won't, mums, honestly." She looked appealingly at her mother, and saw something in her face that was reassuring, for a moment later she was clinging almost fiercely to her mother's arm.

"You must come in one Saturday evening and see my husband," said Mrs. Brunger a few minutes later, as Bindle fumbled with the latch of the hall door. "He's on *The Daily Age,* and is only home a-Saturday nights."

"Oh, do, *please!*" cried the girl, smiles having chased all but the marks of tears from her face, and Bindle promised that he would.

"Now, if Mrs. B. was to 'ear of these little goin's on," he muttered, as he walked toward Fenton Street, "there'd be an 'ell of a row. Mrs. B.'s a good woman, an', bein' a good woman, she's bound to think the worst," and he swung open the gate that led to his "Little Bit of 'Eaven."

II

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Stitchley."

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Bindle. I 'ope I 'aven't come at a inconvenient time."

"No, please come in," said Mrs. Bindle, with almost geniality, as she stood aside to admit her caller, then, closing the front-door behind her, she opened that leading to the parlor.

"Will you just wait here a minute, Mrs. Stitchley, and I'll pull up the blind?" she said.

Mrs. Stitchley smirked and smiled, whilst Mrs. Bindle made her way, with amazing dexterity, through the maze of things with which the room was crammed, in the direction of the window.

A moment later she pulled up the dark-green blind, which was always kept drawn so that the carpet might not fade, and the sunlight shuddered into the room. It revealed a grievous medley of antimacassared chairs, stools, photograph-frames, pictures and ornaments, all of which were very dear to Mrs. Bindle's heart.

"Won't you sit down, Mrs. Stitchley?" inquired Mrs. Bindle primly. Mrs. Stitchley was inveterate in her attendance at the Alton Road Chapel; Bindle had once referred to her as "a chapel 'og."

"Thank you, my dear, thank you," said Mrs. Stitchley, whose manner exuded friendliness.

She looked about her dubiously, and it was Mrs. Bindle who settled matters by indicating a chair of stamped-plush, the seat of which rose hard and high in the center. Over the back was an écru antimacassar, tied with a pale-blue ribbon. After a moment's hesitation, Mrs. Stitchley entrusted it with her person.

"It's a long time since I see you, Mrs. Bindle." They had met three evenings previously at chapel.

Mrs. Bindle smiled feebly. She always suspected Mrs. Stitchley of surreptitious drinking, in spite of the fact that she belonged to the chapel Temperance Society. Mrs. Stitchley's red nose, coupled with the passion she possessed for chewing cloves, had made her fellow-worshiper suspicious.

"Wot a nice room," Mrs. Stitchley looked about her appreciatively, "so genteel, and 'ow refined."

Mrs. Bindle smirked.

"I was sayin' to Stitchley only yesterday mornin' at breakfast—he was 'avin' sausages, 'e bein' so fond of 'em—'Mrs. Bindle 'as taste,' I says, '*and* refinement.' "

Mrs. Bindle, who had seated herself opposite her visitor, drew in her chin and folded her hands before her, with the air of one who is receiving only what she knows to be her due.

There was a slight pause.

"Yes," said Mrs. Stitchley, with a sigh, "I was always one for refinement *and* respectability."

Mrs. Bindle said nothing. She was wondering why Mrs. Stitchley had called. Although she would not have put it into words, or even allow it to find form in her thoughts, she knew Mrs. Stitchley to be a woman to whom gossip was the breath of life.

"Now you're wonderin' why I've come, my dear," continued Mrs. Stitchley, who always grew more friendly as her calls lengthened, "but it's a dooty. I says to Stitchley this mornin', 'There's that poor, dear Mrs. Bindle a-livin' in innocence of the way in which she's bein' vi'lated.' " Mrs. Stitchley was sometimes a little loose in the way she constructed her sentences and the words she selected.

Mrs. Bindle's lips began to assume a hard line.

"I don't understand, Mrs. Stitchley," she said.

"Jest wot I says to Stitchley, 'She don't know, the poor lamb,' I says, ' 'ow she's bein' deceived, 'ow she's ——' " Mrs. Stitchley paused, not from any sense of the dramatic; but because of a violent hiccough that had assailed her.

"Excuse me, mum—Mrs. Bindle," she corrected herself; "but I always was a one for 'iccups, an' when it ain't 'iccups it's spasms. Stitchley was sayin' to me only yesterday, no it wasn't, it was the day before, that——"

"Won't you tell me what you were going to?" said Mrs. Bindle. She knew of old how rambling were Mrs. Stitchley's methods of narration.

"To be sure, to be sure," and she nodded until the jet ornament in her black bonnet seemed to have become palsied. "Well, my dear, it's like this. As I was sayin' to Stitchley this mornin', 'I can't see poor Mrs. Bindle deceived by that monster.' I see through 'im that evenin', a-turnin' your 'appy party into——" she paused for a simile— "into wot 'e turned it into," she added with inspiration.

"Oh! the wickedness of this world, Mrs. Bindle. Oh! the sin and error." She cast up her bleary, watery blue eyes, and gazed at the yellow paper fly-catcher, and once more the jet ornament began to shiver.

"Please tell me what it is, Mrs. Stitchley," said Mrs. Bindle, conscious of a sense of impending disaster.

"The wicked man, the cruel, heartless creature; but they're all the same, as I tell Stitchley, and him with a wife like you, Mrs. Bindle, to carry on with a young Jezebel like that, to——"

"Carry on with a young Jezebel!"

MRS. BINDLE'S WHOLE MANNER had changed. Her uprightness seemed to have become emphasized, and the grim look about her mouth had hardened into one of menace. Her eyes, hard as two pieces of steel, seemed to pierce through her visitor's brain. "What do you mean?" she demanded.

Instinctively Mrs. Stitchley recoiled.

"As I says to Stitchley——" she began, when Mrs. Bindle broke in.

"Never mind Mr. Stitchley," she snapped. "Tell me what you mean."

Mrs. Stitchley looked hurt. Things were not going exactly as she had planned. In the retailing of scandal, she was an artist, and she constructed her periods with a view to their dramatic effect upon her listener.

"Yes," she continued reminiscently, " 'e's been a good 'usbindt, 'as Stitchley. Never no gallivanting with other females. 'E's always said: 'Matilda, my dear, there won't never be another woman for me.' His very words, Mrs. Bindle, I assure *you*," and Mrs. Stitchley preened herself like a moth-eaten peacock.

"You were saying——" began Mrs. Bindle.

"To be sure, to be sure," said Mrs. Stitchley; "but we all 'ave our crosses to bear. The Lord will give you strength, Mrs. Bindle, just as He gave me strength when Stitchley lorst 'is leg. 'The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away,' " she added enigmatically.

"Mrs. Stitchley," said Mrs. Bindle, rising with an air of decision, "I insist on your telling me what you mean."

"Ah! my dear," said Mrs. Stitchley, with an emotion in her voice that she usually kept for funerals, "I knew 'ow it would be. I says to Stitchley, 'Stitchley,' I says, 'that poor, dear woman will suffer. She was made for sufferin'. She's one of them gentle, tender lambs, that's trodden underfoot by the serpent's tooth of man's lust; but she will bear 'er cross.' Them was my very words, Mrs. Bindle," she added, indifferent to the mixture of metaphor.

MRS. BINDLE LOOKED at her visitor helplessly. Her face was very white; but she realized Mrs. Stitchley's loquacity was undammable.

"A-takin' 'ome a young gal at two o'clock in the mornin', and then bein' asked in by 'er mother—and 'er father away at 'is work every night—and 'er not more'n seventeen, and all the neighbors with their 'eads out of the windows, and 'er a-screechin' and askin' of 'er mother not to 'it 'er, and 'er sayin' 'Wait 'till I get you, my gal,' and callin' 'im an ole villain. 'E ought to be took up. I says to Stitchley, 'Stitchley,' I says, 'that man ought to be took up, an' it's only because of Lord George that 'e ain't.' "

"What do you mean?" Mrs. Bindle made an effort to control herself. "Who was it that took someone home at two o'clock in the morning?"

"You poor lamb," croaked Mrs. Stitchley, gazing up at Mrs. Bindle, whose unlamblike qualities were never more marked than at that moment. "You poor lamb. You're being deceived, Mrs. Bindle, cruelly and wickedly vi'lated. Your 'usbindt's carrying on with a young gal wot might 'ave been 'is daughter. Oh! the wickedness of this world, the——"

"I don't believe it."

Mrs. Stitchley started back. The words seemed almost to hit her in the face. She blinked her eyes uncertainly, as she looked at Mrs. Bindle, the embodiment of an outraged wife and a vengeful fury.

"I'm afraid I must be going, my dear," said Mrs. Stitchley; "but I felt I ought to tell you."

"Not until you've told me everything," said Mrs. Bindle, with decision, as she moved towards the door, "and you don't leave this room until you've explained what you mean."

Mrs. Stitchley turned round in her chair as Mrs. Bindle crossed the room, surprise and fear in her eyes.

"Lord a mercy me!" she cried. "Don't ee take on like that, Mrs. Bindle. 'E ain't worth it."

Then Mrs. Bindle proceeded to make it abundantly clear to Mrs. Stitchley that she required the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, without unnecessary circumlocution, verbiage, or obscuring metaphor.

At the end of five minutes she had reduced her visitor to a state of tearful compliance.

At first her periods halted; but she soon got into her stride and swung along with obvious enjoyment.

"My sister-in-law, not as she is my sister-in-law reg'lar, Stitchley's father 'avin' married twice, 'is second bein' a widow with five of 'er own, an' 'er not twenty-nine at the time, reckless, I calls it. As I was sayin', Mrs. Coggles, 'er name's enough to give you a pain, an' the state of 'er 'ome, my dear——" Mrs. Stitchley raised her eyes to the ceiling as if words failed her.

"Well," she continued after a momentary pause, during which Mrs. Bindle looked at her without moving a muscle, "as I was sayin', Mrs. Coggles"—she shuddered slightly as she pronounced the name—"she lives in Arloes Road, No. 9, pink tie-ups to 'er curtains she 'as, an' that flashy in 'er dress. Well, well!" she concluded, as if Christian charity had come to her aid.

"She told me all about it. She was jest a-goin' to bed, bein' late on account of 'Ector, that's 'er seventh, ten months old an' still at the breast, 'avin' wot she thought was convulsions, an' 'earin' the row an' 'ubbub, she goes to the door an' sees everythink, an' that's the gospel truth, Mrs. Bindle, if I was to be struck down like Sulphira."

She then proceeded to give a highly elaborated and ornate account of Bindle's adventure of some six weeks previously. She accompanied her story with a wealth of detail, most of which was inaccurate, coupled with the assurance that the Lord and Mrs. Stitchley would undoubtedly do all in their power to help Mrs. Bindle in her hour of trial.

Finally, Mrs. Stitchley found herself walking down the little tiled path that led to the Bindles' outer gate, in her heart a sense of great injustice.

"Never so much as bite or sup," she mumbled, as she turned out of the gate, taking care to leave it open, "and me a-tellin' 'er all wot I told 'er. I've come across meanness in my time; but I never been refused a cup o' tea, an' me fatiguing myself something cruel to go an' tell 'er. I don't wonder he took up with that bit of a gal."

Herbert Jenkins

is the only man we have ever known who has founded a successful publishing house on a volume of his own writings. This was the first collection of the hilarious adventures of Bindle, Cockney furniture-mover who might be one of Dickens' own characters.

In addition to five Bindle *books, Mr. Jenkins (1876–1923), of Norwich, New Zealand and London, wrote several successful novels, a mystery story and a* Life of George Borrow *that is a standard scholarly work.*

That night she confided in her husband. "Stitchley," she said, "there ain't never smoke without fire, you mark my words," and Stitchley, glancing up from his newspaper, inquired what the 'ell she was gassing about; but she made no comment beyond emphasizing, once more, that he was to mark her words.

That afternoon, Mrs. Bindle worked with a vigor unusual even in her. She attacked the kitchen fire, hurled into the sink a flat-iron that had the temerity to get too hot, scrubbed boards that required no scrubbing, washed linoleum that was spotless, blackleaded where to blacklead was like painting the lily. In short, she seemed determined to exhaust her energies and her anger upon the helpless and inanimate things about her.

From time to time there burst from her closed lips a sound as of one who has difficulty in holding back her pent-up feelings.

At length, having cleaned everything that was cleanable, she prepared a cup of tea, which she drank standing. Then removing her apron and taking her bonnet from the dresser-drawer, she placed it upon her head and adjusted the strings beneath her chin.

Without waiting for any other garment, she left the house and made direct for Arloes Road.

Twice she walked its length, subjecting to a careful scrutiny the house occupied by the Brungers, noting the windows with great care, and finding in them little to criticize. Then she returned to Fenton Street.

The fact of having viewed the actual scene of Bindle's perfidy seemed to corroborate Mrs. Stitchley's story. Before the storm was to be permitted to burst, however, Mrs. Bindle intended to make assurance doubly sure by, as she regarded it in her own mind, "catching him at it."

That night she selected for her evening reading the chapter in the Bible which tells of the plagues of Egypt. Temporarily she saw herself in the rôle of an outraged Providence, whilst for the part of Pharaoh she had cast Bindle, who, unaware of his impending doom, was explaining to Ginger at The Yellow Ostrich that a bigamist ought to be let off because " 'e must be mad to 'ave committed the crime."

III

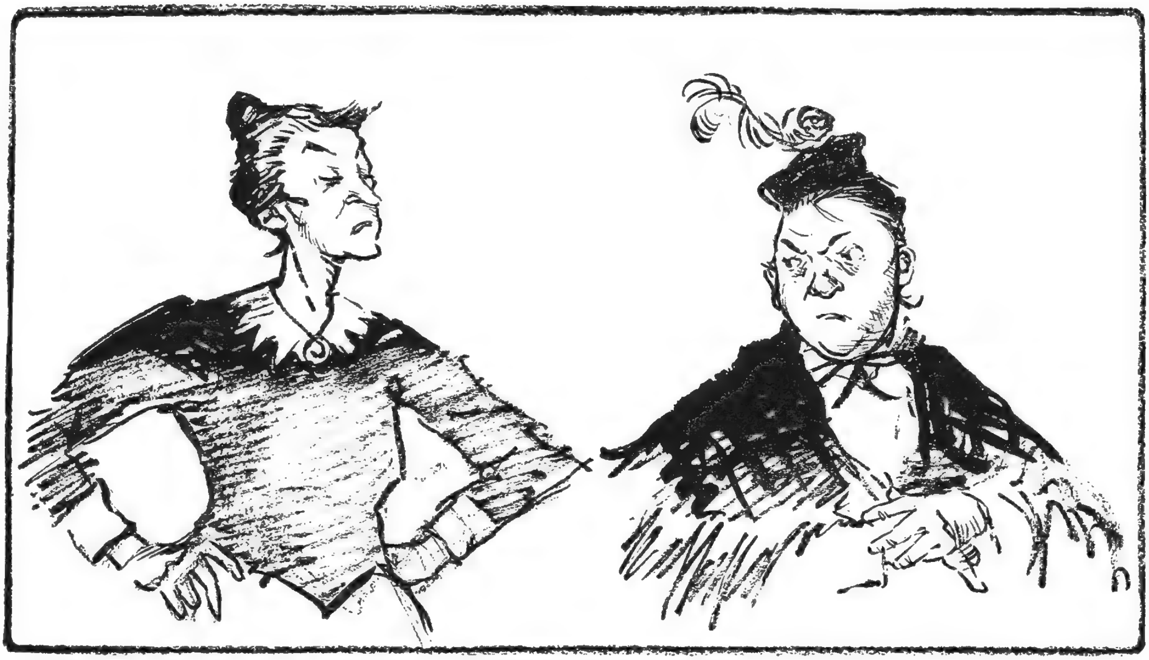
MRS. BINDLE awaited the coming of Saturday evening with a grimness that caused Bindle more than once to regard her curiously. "There's somethink on the 'andle," he muttered prophetically; but as Mrs. Bindle made no sign and, furthermore, as she set before him his favorite dishes, he allowed speculation to become absorbed in appetite and enjoyment.

It was characteristic of Mrs. Bindle that, Bindle being more than usually under a cloud, she should take extra care in the preparation of his meals. It was her way of emphasizing the difference between them; he the erring husband, she the perfect wife.

"I sha'n't be in to supper tonight, Lizzie," Bindle announced casually on the evening of what Mrs. Bindle had already decided was to be her day of wrath. He picked up his bowler that preparatory to making one of his lightning exits.

"Where are you going?" she demanded, hoping to trap him in a lie.

"When you gets yerself up dossy an' says you're goin' to chapel," he remarked, edging toward the door, "I says nothink at all, bein' a trustin' 'usband; so



"You poor lamb," croaked Mrs. Stitchley. "Your 'usbindt's carrying on with a young gal wot might 'ave been 'is daughter."

when I gets myself up ditto an' says I ain't goin' to chapel, you didn't ought to say nothink either, Mrs. B. Wot's sauce for the goose is——"

"You're a bad, black-hearted man, Bindle, and you know it."

The intensity of feeling with which the words were uttered surprised him.

"Don't you think you can throw dust——" She stopped suddenly, then concluded, "You'd better be careful."

"I am, Mrs. B.," he replied cheerily, "careful *as* careful."

Bindle had fallen into a habit of "dropping in" upon the Brungers on Saturday evenings, and for this purpose he had what he described as "a wash an' brush-up." This resolved itself into an entire change of raiment, as well as the customary "rinse" at the kitchen sink. This in itself confirmed Mrs. Stitchley's story.

"Well, s'long," said Bindle, as he opened the kitchen door. "Keep the 'ome fires burnin'," and with that he was gone.

Bindle had learned from past experience that the more dramatic his exit the less likelihood there was of Mrs. Bindle scoring the final dialectical point.

This evening, however, she had other and weightier matters for thought—and action. No sooner had the kitchen door closed than, moving swiftly across to the dresser, she pulled open a drawer, and drew out her dark brown mackintosh and bonnet. With swift, deft movements she drew on the one, and tied the strings of the other beneath her chin. Then, without waiting to look in the mirror over the mantelpiece, she passed into the passage and out of the hall door.

She was just in time to see Bindle disappear round the corner. Without a moment's hesitation she followed.

Unconscious that Mrs. Bindle, like Nemesis, was dogging his steps, Bindle continued his way until finally he turned into Arloes Road. On reaching the second lamp-post he gave vent to a peculiarly shrill whistle. As he opened the gate that led to a neat little house, the front door opened, and a young girl ran down the path and clasped his arm. It was obvious that she had been listening for the signal. A moment later they entered the house together.

For a few seconds Mrs. Bindle stood at the end of the road, staring at the door that had closed behind them. Her face was white and set, and a gray line of grimness marked the spot where her lips had disappeared. She had noted that the girl was pretty, with fair hair that clung about her head in wanton little tendrils, and, furthermore, that it was bound with a broad band of light green ribbon.

"The villain!" she muttered between set teeth, as she turned and retraced her steps. "I'll show him."

Arrived back at Fenton Street, she went straight upstairs and proceeded to make an elaborate toilet. A little more than an hour later the front door once more closed behind her, and Mrs. Bindle proceeded upon her way, buttoning her painfully tight gloves, conscious that sartorially she was a triumph of completeness.

IV

"AN' 'AS 'ER NIBS been a good gal all the week?" Bindle paused in the act of raising a glass of ale to his lips.

"I have, mums, haven't I?" Elsie Brunger broke in, without giving her mother a chance to reply.

Mrs. Brunger nodded. The question had caught her at a moment when her mouth was overfull of fried plaice and potatoes.

"That's the ticket," said Bindle approvingly. "No bein' out late an' gettin' 'ome with the milk, or"—he paused impressively—"I gets another gal, see?"

By this time Mrs. Brunger had reduced the plaice and potatoes to conversational proportions.

"She's been helping me a lot in the house, too," she said from above a white silk blouse that seemed determined to show how much there really was of Mrs. Brunger.

Elsie looked triumphantly across the supper-table at Bindle.

"That's a good gal," said Bindle approvingly.

"You've done her a lot of good, Mr. Bindle," said Mrs. Brunger, "and me and George are grateful, ain't we, George?"

Mr. Brunger, a heavy-faced man with sad, lusterless eyes and a sallow skin, nodded. He was a man to whom speech came with difficulty, but on this occasion his utterance was constricted by a fish-bone lodged somewhere in the neighborhood of the root of his tongue.

"Wonderful 'ow all the gals take to me," remarked Bindle. "Chase me round gooseberry bushes, they do; anythink to get me."

"You go on with you, do," laughed Mrs. Brunger. "How was I to know?"

"I said I was a dove. You 'eard me, didn't you, Fluffy?" he demanded, turning to Elsie.

"I won't be called Fluffy," she cried, in mock indignation. "You know I don't like it."

"The man who goes about doin' wot a woman says she likes ain't goin' to get much jam," remarked Bindle oracularly.

"Now, let's get cleared away, mother," remarked Mr. Brunger, speaking for the first time.

"Oh, dad! don't you love your dominoes?" cried Elsie, jumping up and giving him a hug. "All right, mums and I will soon sound the 'All clear.' Come along, uncle; you buttle." This to Bindle.

Amidst much chatter and laughter the table was cleared, the red cloth spread in place of the white, and the domino-box reached down from the kitchen mantelpiece. The serious business of the evening had begun.

Mr. Brunger had only one evening a week at home, and this he liked to divide between his family and his favorite game, giving the major part of his attention to the game.

At one time he had been in the habit of asking in some friend or acquaintance to join him; but, since the arrival of Bindle, it had become an understood thing that the same quartette should meet each Saturday evening.

Mrs. Brunger would make a pretense of crocheting. The product possessed one thing in common with the weaving of Penelope, in that it never seemed to make any appreciable progress towards completion.

Mr. Brunger devoted himself to the rigors of the game, and Elsie would flutter between the two players, bursting, but never daring, to give the advice that her superior knowledge made valuable.

Bindle kept the party amused, that is, except Mr. Brunger, who was too wrapped up in the bone parallelograms before him to be conscious of anything else.

Elsie would as soon have thought of missing her Sunday dinner as those Saturday evenings, and Mrs. Brunger soon found that a new and powerful weapon had been thrust into her hand.

"Very well, you go to bed at seven on Saturday," she would say, which was inevitably followed by an "Oh, mums!" of contrition and docility.

"Out! You're beaten, uncle," cried Elsie, clapping her hands, and enjoying the look of mock mortification with which Bindle regarded the dominoes before him.

Mr. Brunger leaned back in his chair, an expression of mild triumph modifying his heavily-jowled countenance. It was remarkable how consistently Mr. Brunger was victor.

At that moment a loud and peremptory rat-tat-tat sounded down the passage.

"Now, I wonder who that is." Mrs. Brunger put down her crochet upon the table and rose.

"Don't you bring anyone in here, mother," ordered Mr. Brunger, fearful that his evening was to be spoiled, as he began to mix the dominoes. There was no music so dear to his soul as their click-clack, as they brushed shoulders with one another.

Mrs. Brunger left the room and, carefully closing the door behind her, passed along the short passage and opened the door.

"I've come for my husband!"

On the door-step stood Mrs. Bindle, grim as Fate. Her face was white, her eyes hard, and her mouth little more than indicated by a line of shadow between her closely pressed lips. The words seemed to strike Mrs. Brunger dumb.

"Your—your husband?" she repeated at length.

"Yes, my 'usband." Mrs. Bindle's diction was losing its purity and precision under the stress of great emotion. "I know 'e's here. Don't you deny it. I saw 'im come. Oh, you wicked woman!"

Mrs. Brunger blinked in her bewilderment. She was taken by surprise at the suddenness of the assault; but her temper was rising under this insulting and unprovoked attack.

"What's that you call me?" she demanded.

"Taking a woman's lawful wedded 'usband——" began Mrs. Bindle, when she was interrupted by Mrs. Brunger.

"Here, come in," she cried, mindful that inside the house only those on either side could hear, whereas on the door-step their conversation would be the property of the whole street.

Mrs. Bindle followed Mrs. Brunger into the parlor. For a moment the two women were silent, whilst Mrs. Brunger found the matches, lighted the gas, and lowered the blind.

"Now, what's the matter with you? What's your trouble?" demanded Mrs. Brunger. "Out with it."

"I want my 'usband," repeated Mrs. Bindle, a little taken aback by the fierceness of the onslaught.

"An' what have I got to do with your husband, I should like to know?"

"He's here. You're encouraging him, leading him away from——" Mrs. Bindle paused.

"Leadin' him away from what?" demanded Mrs. Brunger.

"From me!"

"Leadin' him away, am I?—leadin' him away, I think you said?" Mrs. Brunger placed a hand on either hip and thrust her face forward, causing Mrs. Bindle involuntarily to start back.

"Oh! you needn't be afraid. I'm not goin' to hit you. Leadin' him away was what you said." Mrs. Brunger paused dramatically, and leaned back slightly, as if to get a more comprehensive view of her antagonist. "Well, he must be a pretty short-sighted fool to want leadin' away from a thing like you. I'd ha' run hell-hard if I was him."

The biting scorn of the words, the insultingly contemptuous tone in which they were uttered, for a moment seemed to daze Mrs. Bindle; but only for a breathing space.

Making a swift recovery, she turned upon her antagonist a stream of accusation and reproach.

She told how a fellow-worshiper at the Alton Road Chapel had witnessed the return of Bindle the night of the altercation in the front garden. She accused mother and daughter of unthinkable crimes, bringing Scriptural quotation to her aid.

She confused Fulham and Hammersmith with Sodom and Gomorrah. She called upon an all-seeing Providence to purge the district in general, and Arloes Road in particular, of its pestilential populace.

She traced the descent of Mrs. Brunger down generations of infamy and sin. She threatened her with punishment in this world and the next. She told of Bindle's neglect and wickedness, and cast him out into the tooth-gnashing darkness. She trampled him under foot, arranged that Providence should spurn him and his associates, and consign them all to eternal and fiery damnation.

Gradually she worked herself up into a frenzy of hysterical invective. Little points of foam formed at the corners of her mouth. Her bonnet had slipped off backwards, and hung by its strings round her neck. Her right-hand glove of biscuit brown had split across the palm. Mrs. Bindle had lost all control of herself.

"He's here! He's here! I saw him come! You Jezebel! You're hiding him; but I'll find him. I'll find him. You—you——"

With a wild, hysterical scream, she darted to the door, tore it open, dashed along the passage, and burst into the kitchen.

"So I've caught you with the Jez——" She stopped as if petrified.

Mr. Brunger had just played his last domino, and was sitting back in his chair in triumph. Elsie, one arm round her father's neck, was laughing derisively at Bindle, who sat gazing with comical concern at five dominoes standing on their sides facing him.

All three heads jerked round, and three pairs of widened eyes gazed at the disheveled, white-faced figure, standing looking down at them with the light of madness in its eyes.

"Oo-er!" gasped Elsie, as her arms tightened round her father's neck, almost strangling him.

"Grrrmp," choked Mr. Brunger, dropping his pipe on to his knees.

Bindle started up, overturning his chair in the movement. His eyes were blazing, his lips were set in a firm line, and his hands were clenched at his sides.

"You—you get out of 'ere!" the words seemed to burst from him involuntarily, "or——"

For one bewildered moment, Mrs. Bindle stared at him, in her eyes a look in which surprise and fear seemed to strive for mastery. Her gaze wandered on to the frightened girl clutching her father round the neck, and then back to Bindle. She turned as suddenly as she had entered, cannoned off Mrs. Brunger, who stood behind her, and stumbled blindly along the passage out into the street.

Mrs. Brunger followed, and closed the front door behind her. When she returned to the kitchen, Bindle had picked up his chair and resumed his seat. His hands were trembling slightly, and he was very white.

"She—she ain't been well lately," he muttered huskily. "I——"

"Now, mother, where's the beer? I'm feeling a bit thirsty"; and after this unusually lengthy speech Mr. Brunger proceeded to shuffle the dominoes with an almost alarming vigor, whilst Elsie, wonder-eyed and a little pale, sat on the arm of her father's chair glancing covertly at Bindle.

That night, when he returned home, Bindle found laid out on the kitchen table, a bottle of beer, a glass, two pieces of bread and butter, a piece of cheese and a small dish of pickled onions.

"Well, I'm blowed!" he muttered, at the sight of this unusual attention. "Wonders'll never cease," and he proceeded to unscrew the stopper of the beer-bottle.

The incident of the Brungers was never subsequently referred to between them; but Mrs. Bindle gave herself no rest until she had unmasked the cause of all the trouble.

Mrs. Stitchley was persuaded to see the reason why she should withdraw from the Alton Road Chapel Temperance Society, the reason being a half-quartern bottle of gin, from which she was caught imbibing at a magic-lantern entertainment—and it was Mrs. Bindle who caught her.

Light

By
FRANCIS
WILLIAM
BOURDILLON

The Night has a thousand eyes,
And the Day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

A genius of the modern short story tenderly lays bare the loneliness in a child's heart

The Little Girl

By KATHERINE MANSFIELD

TO THE LITTLE GIRL he was a figure to be feared and avoided. Every morning before going to business he came into the nursery and gave her a perfunctory kiss, to which she responded with "Good-by, father." And oh, the glad sense of relief when she heard the noise of the buggy growing fainter and fainter down the long road!

In the evening, leaning over the banisters at his home-coming, she heard his loud voice in the hall. "Bring my tea into the smoking-room. . . . Hasn't the paper come yet? Have they taken it into the kitchen again? Mother, go and see if my paper's out there—and bring me my slippers."

"Kezia," mother would call to her, "if you're a good girl you can come down and take off father's boots." Slowly the girl would slip down the stairs, holding tightly to the banisters with one hand—more slowly still, across the hall, and push open the smoking-room door.

By that time he had his spectacles on and looked at her over them in a way that was terrifying to the little girl.

"Well, Kezia, get a move on and pull off these boots and take them outside. Been a good girl today?"

"I d-d-don't know, father."

"You d-d-don't know? If you stutter like that mother will have to take you to the doctor."

She never stuttered with other people—had quite given it up—but only with father, because then she was trying so hard to say the words properly.

"What's the matter? What are you looking so wretched about? Mother, I wish you would teach this child not to appear on the brink of suicide. . . . Here, Kezia, carry my tea cup back to the table—carefully; your hands jog like an old lady's. And try to keep your handkerchief in your pocket, *not* up your sleeve."

"Y-y-yes, father."

On Sundays she sat in the same pew with him in church, listening while he sang in a loud, clear voice, watching while he made little notes during the sermon with the stump of a blue pencil on the back of an envelop—his eyes narrowed to a slit—one hand beating a silent tattoo on the pew ledge. He said his prayers so loudly she was certain God heard him above the clergyman.

He was so big—his hands and his neck, especially his mouth when he yawned. Thinking about him alone in the nursery was like thinking about a giant.

On Sunday afternoons grandmother sent her down to the drawing-room, dressed in her brown velvet, to have a "nice talk with father and mother." But the little girl always found mother reading *The Sketch* and father stretched out on the couch, his handkerchief on his face, his feet propped on one of the best soft pillows, and so soundly sleeping that he snored.

She, perched on the piano-stool, gravely watched him until he woke and stretched, and asked the time—then looked at her.

"Don't stare so, Kezia. You look like a little brown owl."

One day, when she was kept indoors with a cold, the grandmother told her that father's birthday was next week, and suggested she should make him a pin-cushion for a present out of a beautiful piece of yellow silk.

Laboriously, with a double cotton, the little girl stitched three sides. But what to fill it with? That was the question. The grandmother was out in the garden, and she wandered into mother's bedroom to look for "scraps." On the bed table she discovered a great many sheets of fine paper, gathered them up, shredded them into tiny pieces, and stuffed her case, then sewed up the fourth side.

That night there was a hue and cry over the house.

Father's great speech for the Port Authority had been lost. Rooms were ransacked—servants questioned. Finally mother came into the nursery.

"Kezia, I suppose you didn't see some papers on a table in our room?"

"Oh, yes," she said. "I tore them up for my s'prise."

"*What!*" screamed mother. "Come straight down to the dining-room this instant."

And she was dragged down to where father was pacing to and fro, hands behind his back.

"Well," he said sharply.

Mother explained.

He stopped and stared in a stupefied manner at the child. "Did you do that?"

"N-n-no," she whispered.

"Mother, go up to the nursery and fetch down the damned thing—see that the child's put to bed this instant."

Crying too much to explain, she lay in the shadowed room watching the evening light sift through the venetian blinds and trace a sad pattern on the floor.

Katherine Mansfield.

KATHERINE MANSFIELD *died suddenly at Fontainebleau in 1923, when she was herself hardly more than a girl. For five years she had struggled heartbreakingly with her dreadful illness, trying to get said some part of what she had to say, and to say none of it less than perfectly. Only a few slim books of sketches and stories bear her name, yet these have established her as the most remarkable short story writer of her generation in England.*

Her journal, published posthumously by her husband (the leading critic, John Middleton Murry), is an astonishing record of her strivings to get "the deepest truth out of an idea," to "be simple as one would be simple before God." In such stories as THE LITTLE GIRL, THE STRANGER, BLISS, *and others which we plan to publish, she approached her ideal closely indeed.*

Then father came into the room with a ruler in his hands.

"I am going to whip you for this," he said.

"Oh, no, no!" she screamed, cowering down under the bedclothes.

He pulled them aside.

"Sit up," he commanded, "and hold out your hands. You must be taught once and for all not to touch what does not belong to you."

"But it was for your b-b-birthday."

Down came the ruler on her little, pink palms.

Hours later, when the grandmother had wrapped her in a shawl and rocked her in the rocking-chair the child cuddled close to her soft body.

"What did Jesus make fathers for?" she sobbed.

"Here's a clean hanky, darling, with some of my lavender water on it. Go to sleep, pet; you'll forget all about it in the morning. I tried to explain to father, but he was too upset to listen tonight."

But the child never forgot. Next time she saw him she whipped both hands behind her back, and a red color flew into her cheeks.

The MacDonalds lived in the next-door house. Five children there were. Looking through a hole in the vegetable garden fence the little girl saw them playing "tag" in the evening. The father with the baby Mac on his shoulders, two little girls hanging on to his coat tails, ran round and round the flower bed, shaking with laughter. Once she saw the boys turn the hose on him—*turn the hose on him*—and he made a great grab at them, tickling them until they got hiccoughs.

Then it was she decided there were different sorts of fathers.

Suddenly, one day, mother became ill, and she and grandmother drove into town in a closed carriage.

The little girl was left alone in the house with Alice, the "general." That was all right in the daytime, but while Alice was putting her to bed she grew suddenly afraid.

"What'll I do if I have nightmare?" she asked. "I *often* have nightmare, and then grannie takes me into her bed—I can't stay in the dark—it all gets 'whispery.' . . . What'll I do if I do?"

"You just go to sleep, child," said Alice, pulling off her socks and whacking them against the bed-rail, "and don't you holler out and wake your poor pa."

But the same old nightmare came—the butcher with a knife and a rope who grew nearer and nearer, smiling that dreadful smile, while she could not move, could only stand still, crying out, "Grandma, Grandma!" She woke shivering, to see father beside her bed, a candle in his hand.

"What's the matter?" he said.

"Oh, a butcher—a knife—I want grannie." He blew out the candle, bent down and caught up the child in his arms, carrying her along the passage to the big room.

A newspaper was lying on the bed—a half-smoked cigar balanced against his reading-lamp. He pitched the paper on the floor, threw the cigar into the fireplace, then carefully tucked up the child. He lay down beside her. Half asleep still, still with the butcher's smile all about her, it seemed, she crept close to him, snuggled her head under his arm, held tightly to his pajama jacket.

Then the dark did not matter; she lay still.

"Here, rub your feet against my legs and get them warm," said father.

Tired out, he slept before the little girl. A funny feeling came over her. Poor father! Not so big, after all—and with no one to look after him. . . . He was harder than the grandmother, but it was a nice hardness. . . . And every day he had to work, and was too tired to be a Mr. MacDonald. . . . She had torn up all his beautiful writing. . . . She stirred suddenly, and sighed.

"What's the matter?" asked father. "Another dream?"

"Oh," said the little girl, "my head's on your heart; I can hear it going. What a big heart you've got, father dear."

God is the eternal confidant in that tragedy where everyone is the hero.

BAUDELAIRE.

The Beating of the Reed

Drawings by Mahlon Blaine

By MANUEL KOMROFF

Manuel Komroff

You can never trust an oboe player . . . and she was just as queer as he was—only an octave higher. . . .

A STRAW CAN BREAK a camel's back, but you have no idea of the amount of trouble that a bit of reed may cause. Let me explain. In an orchestra every instrument has its own character, and every musician must give way, to a certain extent, to his instrument. Many people think that the man controls his instrument, but more often than not it is the instrument that does most of the ruling. On the whole, we musicians are a tame lot, and most of our instruments are, in a way, kind. Perhaps "kind" is not the right word—you might call it meek or bland—but that makes no difference, because you know what I mean. As a rule musicians are tame and their music harmless, but every now and then there is something that breaks loose. You never break a heavy G string; it is always the thin E that snaps. And that is the way it is in life. A time comes when something is bound to break loose, and when it does it is like the piercing shriek of a high-strung nervous woman . . . something out of harmony with everything. But modern music requires it, and it takes all things to make a good orchestra.

Yet I really have no complaint with myself. The 'cello is a peaceful instrument, and I have had fairly steady work with the Symphony for over twenty years. But I guess it is all a matter of luck, and I never looked for any trouble. I do my work and teach my pupils, and when evening comes around I go and get a good glass of beer and that ends my day. But some are different. It takes all kinds of people to make a world and all kinds of characters to fill an orchestra.

The bass fiddle is a steady instrument, always on time and never looking for trouble. If you lend money to a bass-fiddler he will always pay . . . sometimes a little delayed, but that is only because he is big and slow. But a clarinet is different. He will pay also, but he likes to drink and talk and have a good time. It's a trick instrument, but at the same time clever. Always to the point, in a quiet way, and not at all like his younger brother, the oboe. Be careful of the oboe. Never trust an oboe, for you can never tell what he will do.

Meisterberg, my teacher, used to say—"Never fool with the oboe player, because you can't fool with a fool." Sometimes, when he was conducting, he would rap on the stand and say—"Once more from the cadenza" and under his breath he would murmur so that only those near him could hear—"The oboe is as stupid as a tenor."

Never trust an oboe. Sometimes he plays and sometimes he doesn't play. It seems to depend on his humor, and at the same time the whole orchestra must keep tune to him. You can't tune an oboe . . . it just plays as he is. And after everybody is all tuned up to him, he is just as likely as not to quit playing. You can never trust an oboe.

Twenty years I've played with different orchestras, and never yet did I know the oboe player not to be a clown. If he doesn't put his feet out to trip you he will drop rosin into your instrument or loosen your bow. There was Peter Schmidt, for instance, who played with the Harmony Group; he was sixty-five years old, and never once did he miss a chance to stick his foot out into the aisle. It didn't matter who it was. It was always a joke to him, and its humor never wore off. If you broke your neck—he'd laugh!

But that is not the story I wanted to tell. What I wanted to tell was about this fellow Fred. You can never trust an oboe player. Like Meisterberg used to say, "You can't fool with a fool."

FRED NEVER JOKED very much, but he was a clown just the same. The way he wore his little hat was enough. You could see at a glance he was an oboe player even if he hid the instrument under his coat. And sometimes he did this too. He would take the instrument apart, just before we had to go up on the stage, so that he could walk on empty-handed like the conductor. Then he would take the different sections out of his pockets and put them together, and look around and grin. This he thought was a great joke. But I always smiled, when no one else did, for he confided in me. A man must tell his troubles to someone. I never laughed at him, because I know what an oboe is like and what it can do.

These young fellows that study for a few years and show off with a little smattering of modern music . . . and carry Scriabin scores in their pockets, what do they know about music? But when you are trained in Europe, and you have had such teachers as Meisterberg, then you know enough to respect everything. And you know that it takes all kinds of characters to make an orchestra, and you know that the oboe is like the piercing cry of a nervous woman.

In a way, the oboe player is not to be blamed for acting queerly. He often can't help it. I once heard a fellow expound a theory about the oboe. He claimed that the rapid vibration of the little reed in the player's mouth loosened the nerves and even disarranged the brain. It is like the last straw that breaks a camel's back. Only it takes much more time. Anyway, it was a theory that seemed to fit in well with the character of the instrument and with most of the players. If you think of the oboe and the way it cries wildly, like a Frenchman through his nose, you will understand what I mean.

This fellow Fred, whom I started to tell you about, was with us for six years, when suddenly, without any warning, his playing became shrill and wild. It would go right through you like a cold knife. The conductor would rap for *piano* and for *pianissimo*, but Fred would never hear. In the dressing-room we would argue with him, but all he ever replied was—"The reed—it beats!" and he would hold his head.

This lasted for about two months, when suddenly, one morning, he burst into the room just as I was in the middle of giving a pupil a lesson, and shouted: "I killed her! I killed her! The reed, it beats—it beats. I couldn't stand it any longer; I had to do it. What shall I do; I think I killed her!" He threw himself on his knees and crushed his hat down tight upon his head. "It beats—it beats . . . I had to do it."

Picture such a scene to yourself. He was kneeling on the floor and held his arms around his head. The pupil dropped his bow and just vanished. What was I to do? He was in a terrible state, and I could do nothing with him. "You think you killed your wife?" I asked. "Was it an accident, and why did you have to do it?" I tried to calm him. I tried to pull him into a chair. I shook him. "Why?" I repeated, but all I could get out of him were the words: "It beats! It beats!"

I was sure he had worked himself up over nothing, but you dare not trust an oboe player. I got down on the floor and pleaded with him to pull himself together and be a man. But when he saw me on my knees he began to weep like a five-year-old girl, and between gasps cried: "What am I to do? Send for a doctor, or something. I had to do it, but I didn't mean to do it. The oboe did it! It beats! It hammers in my head. It makes me cry out when I want to be quiet. It makes me sad when everyone is happy. It makes me run into the street without a hat, and suddenly it commands me to be still, and holds me bound to the ground like a rock. It beats. . . . And I am the slave. Nobody knows what is inside of me, but the oboe knows everything. My innermost thoughts it knows, and it beats them out when I don't want them known. A cruel master that beats a slave. His slave! Ha, ha! Yes, I am laughing! But you won't laugh when I tell you the discovery I made. I might have known it years ago, but I never suspected . . . who could have told me? I must learn everything for myself, and the other day I discovered that it was a woman! Yes . . . the oboe was a woman. A hissing, snaky, jealous woman. Jealous of everything! Jealous of my darling. Jealous of life itself. I might have guessed it before. I might have known it. But now it's too late. Too late. She made me kill her. What am I to do? It beats! It beats!"

In this manner he rambled on and on. Tears dropped from his face. But I had no time to lose. I quickly put on my hat and coat, and was about to run over to his house when suddenly I stopped and said to myself—"No one will understand him. He will get into mischief. He must not be left alone. Musicians are different; we settle things in our own way." I dragged him to the side of the room and locked him in the clothes-closet. As I turned the key in the lock I could hear his muffled cries. "She was jealous. It beats! She made me do it."

I rushed through the streets. A confusion of thoughts ran through my mind. I was certain that it was some foolish accident that had completely unnerved him. Yet I feared that she might be in need, though if you knew her it would be hard to imagine it. I must tell you now that if *he* was queer then *she* was just as queer—only an octave higher. Fred was skinny as a lead-pencil, but she was a toothpick, a toothpick sharp at both ends. How they lived I can't understand. You never saw them eat, and they seemed never to sleep. First of all, they were vegetarians—but they never ate vegetables . . . only nuts and fruit. And even at that they didn't eat much fruit.

but always nibbled on the peels. It's a theory they had. Where he found her I can't say, but it would be difficult to find another. Then she played violin, and for a time quite well; but how she could endure his practising on the oboe, I could never understand.

After a woman is married a year or two you would naturally expect her to broaden out, but with her it was the reverse. She grew thinner every day. Each time I saw her I was certain that she would not live till the next day. . . . With her everything seemed reversed. When she made a dress she turned the goods wrong side out, her pictures she hung upside down, photographs she cut into triangles, her clothes she would fold up, and her shoes she would hang in the closet. After a year or so she stopped playing her violin. I do not know whether it was because you had to play the notes from left to right and this to her seemed wrong. With her everything seemed wrong!

Manuel Komroff apologizes to us for being alive—

Says He: "*Dead authors are better than live ones. The live ones are best when they are quiet and silent. The ideal author should be deaf, dumb and blind. Deaf so that he cannot hear offers from Hollywood; dumb so that he cannot annoy the countryside with what are called lectures, and blind so that he cannot read what the critics say. . . . With these advantages he should be free to do some good work. He could use the touch system on the typewriter . . .*"

Apologetically *or no, Mr. Komroff is very much alive indeed. Born in New York City in 1890, of Slavic parents, he has led a busy life as art critic, editor, traveler, and writer. He has just succeeded his earlier books* (Grace of Lambs, Juggler's Kiss, The Voice of Fire, Travels of Marco Polo) *with a panoramic novel of eighteenth century life in Europe,* Coronet, *that promises to take a prominent place among important novels of the year.*

I forgot to tell you they never drank tea or coffee . . . they had an idea it was poison. And they didn't believe in belts or garters or anything that went round because they said it stopped the circulation. He was thin and as bony as a lead-pencil and she was like a toothpick. In the whole wide world I doubt if you could find a queerer couple. They were an incomparable pair.

Then you couldn't talk to them, because they had such funny ideas about . . . about everything. The world to her was a system. Everything she blamed on what she called "the system." Now I know that for fifty-cent pupils you have one system and for dollar pupils you have another system. But she was a socialist, and to her the whole world was one system. He did not bother so much about this, but if you ever spoke to him about music. . . . Often he explained to us for hours why the orchestra is arranged wrong and how it should be made right by putting the kettle-drums in the middle and the fiddles all around the back. It's almost as bad as the joke about the army captain who wanted the band fixed so that the little men played the small instruments and the big men played the big. . . . Yes, he wanted the drums in the middle and he explained it in a reasonable way. While he was talking it sounded all right, and often I thought he was a great man—a genius. But when I went home and thought it over, then I felt he was just a plain damn fool.

Well, that's the way they lived. Either he was a genius or a damn fool, and whatever he was, she was the same, only an octave higher. All skin and bones. . . . They were married four years when he began playing with that shrill cry. And the penetrating nasal twang from his oboe would cut right through you. The conductor would rap and shout, but it did no good. His one oboe was enough wood-wind for fourteen orchestras. And he would cry—"The reed—the reed! It beats—it beats!"— And he would hold his head. A straw can break a camel's back, and it seems he couldn't stand it a minute longer. All this came back to me as I rushed through the streets. At last I reached the house where he lived.

Up the steps I leaped—two at a time. The door was closed. I put my hand on the knob and was just about to open, when my attention was arrested by the playing of a violin. Such playing! "Who can it be?" I asked myself. "Where can it be? Impossible!" Yes, it was true. I threw open the door, and there she was, sitting between the rounds of a chair that was turned upside down, playing her instrument. Her bony elbow was tied with a handkerchief, but it did not prevent her fiddling the most difficult passages. She appeared not to see me. Words failed me. What could I say? I tried to say something, but when I did she marked time with her foot and beat her loose sandal upon the floor. She did not hear and she did not want to hear. I had nothing to say. And as I came in haste, I left the same way.

Now I had good reason to run. My feet could not travel fast enough. The key was in my hand. I held it so tight it left a mark in my palm. I made straight for the closet, but I fumbled with the key in the lock, and as I was trying to open the door, I heard strange sounds like the cracking of nuts. A scraping, grinding, snapping sound. "Good God"—I thought, "he has gone mad." But when I opened the door there he sat on a suit-case, and under his feet were the fragments of his oboe. He was crushing it to bits.

The excitement that followed is hard to relate. It was one long yell of confusion. He ran through the streets and I after him. People must have thought me chasing a thief. When I arrived, she was already in his arms. . . . Married people understand things that no one else can. And musicians don't have to talk very much.

But what was it? It was difficult to make head or tail of it. He had one story and she had quite another. I had to piece the fragments together, and as I made it out, it all happened because of his hair, which she objected to, because it would hang down over his eyes when he practised on the oboe. She said his hair was wrong, and that morning she took the shears while he was playing and began to clip his locks. Did you ever hear of anything so ridiculous? He kept on playing until suddenly he realized what was happening. Then he snatched the shears and flung them at her. They cut her arm. She reeled and fell to the floor. He was confused, frightened, and imagined the worst. Not knowing what to do he ran to me.

In the end it all turned out pretty well. She has gone back to the violin, and gives concerts, while he has charge of the battery in our Symphony. Often when I look up to his corner, he will point his drumstick to the feet of the conductor. That is just to tell me that the arrangement is bad and that his drums should be in the center.

Now, that is about all there is—excepting the pupil. The pupil came back the following week and said that he was unable to practise because he had left his bow. Well, I was going to give him a lesson of a different kind. I was about to tell him that when people are married four or five years, a certain beating creeps in which, with reverses and low ebbs of fortune, can be magnified to a horrible and wild tom-tom, making them both slaves to the monotony of the repetition. Yes, I was going to give him this kind of lesson, but I felt that he wouldn't understand, and besides, I hadn't that much time. You know, you have one system for dollar pupils and another for fifty-cent pupils.

The Will of Charles Lounsbury

IN THE NAME OF GOD, *amen.*

I, CHARLES LOUNSBURY, being of sound and disposing mind and memory, do now make and publish this my last will and testament, in order, as justly as I may, to distribute my interests in the world among succeeding men. And first, that part of my interests which is known among men and recognized in the sheep-bound volumes of the law as my property, being inconsiderable and of none account, I make no account of in this my will. My right to live, it being but a life estate, is not at my disposal, but, these things excepted, all else in the world I now proceed to devise and bequeath.

Item: And first, I give to good fathers and mothers, but in trust for their children, nevertheless, all good little words of praise and all quaint pet names, and I charge said parents to use them justly, but generously, as the needs of their children shall require.

Item: I leave to children exclusively, but only for the life of their childhood, all and every the dandelions of the fields and the daisies thereof, with the right to play among them freely, according to the custom of children, warning them at the same time against the thistles. And I devise to children the yellow shores of creeks and the golden sands beneath the waters thereof, with the dragon-flies that skim the surface of said waters, and the odors of the willows that dip into said waters, and the white clouds that float over giant trees.

And I leave to children the long, long days to be merry in, in a thousands ways, and the Night and the Moon and the train of the Milky Way to wonder at, but subject, nevertheless, to the rights hereinafter given to lovers; and I give to each child the right to choose a star that shall be his.

Item: I devise to boys jointly all the useful idle fields and commons where ball may be played, and all snow-clad hills where one may coast, and all streams and ponds where one may skate, to have and to hold the same for the period of their boyhood. And all woods, with squirrels and whirring birds and echoes and strange noises; and all distant places which may be visited, together with the adventures there found, I do give to said boys to be theirs. And I give to said boys each his own place at the fireside at night, with all pictures that may be seen in the burning wood or coal, to enjoy without let or hindrance and without any incumbrance of cares.

Item: To lovers I devise their imaginary world, with whatever they may need, as the stars of the sky, the red, red roses by the wall, the snow of the hawthorn, the sweet strains of music, or aught else they may desire to figure to each other the beauty of their love.

Item: To young men jointly, being joined in a brave, mad crowd, I devise and bequeath all boisterous, inspiring sports of rivalry. I give to them the disdain of weakness and undaunted confidence in their own strength. Though they are rude and rough, I leave to them alone the power of making lasting friendships and of possessing companions, and to them exclusively I give all merry songs and brave choruses to sing.

Item: And to those who are no longer children, or youths, or lovers, I leave Memory, and I leave to them the volumes of the poems of Burns and Shakespeare, and of other poets, if there are others, to the end that they may live the old days over again freely and fully, without tithe or diminution; and to those who are no longer children, or youths, or lovers, I leave, too, the knowledge of what a rare, rare world it is.

WILLISTON FISH

One of France's great writers immortalizes a gallant little grisette

Mimi Pinson

By ALFRED DE MUSSET

Translated by Frances Newman

AMONG THE STUDENTS at the Medical College last year, there was a young man called Eugène Aubert, who came of a good family and who was barely nineteen years old. His parents lived in the provinces and gave him a small allowance which he found quite sufficient. He lived quietly, and people thought him mild and gentle. His fellow students were fond of him because he was always amiable and obliging, and always generous and sympathetic. The only fault for which they reproached him was a singular taste for reverie and solitude and a reserve so extreme that they nicknamed him Little Girl—a name at which he laughed himself, and which his friends meant as a joke because they knew that he was as brave as any of them. But his conduct did justify the nickname a little, particularly because it was so different from the conduct of his companions. When there was a question of studying, he was the first one at work, but when the question was a matter of pleasure, of a dinner at the Mouline de Beurre or of a dance at the Chaumière, the Little Girl shook his head and went back to his shabby little room. The most shocking thing to the other students was that he had no mistress, although his youth and his good looks would have won numbers of girls for him—that no one had even seen him sparking with a grisette across her counter, as everyone has always done in the Latin Quarter. The beauties who inhabit the Mount of Saint Geneviève and divide the affections of the students among themselves inspired in him only a distaste that went so far as to become positive aversion. He considered them a species apart, a dangerous, useless, depraved species, created to exchange misery and misfortune for their pleasures.

"Look out for those women," he was always saying. "They are dolls made of red-hot iron." And, unfortunately, he found only too many examples to justify his horror of them. The quarrels, the dissipation, the actual ruin that follow these casual connections, which look like happiness from the outside, were as easy to cite last year as they are this year and as they will doubtless be next year.

It goes without saying that Eugène's friends were eternally teasing him about his virtue and his scruples. "What of it?" asked a certain Marcel who made a profession of enjoying himself. "What does one blunder prove, or one accidental casualty?"

"That one must avoid the things which might cause another accidental casualty," Eugène answered.

"Fallacious argument," Marcel said, "the argument of a playing-card that falls if its comrade stumbles. What are you worrying about? One of us loses at cards, but is that any reason for becoming a monk? One hasn't a penny, another has nothing to drink except fresh water; but does Élise lose her appetite? If her neighbor pawns his watch and goes off to Montmorency and breaks his arm, she does not lose hers. You have a duel because of Rosalie, your opponent runs you through. She turns her back. That is quite simple—has it injured her figure? Those are some of the little inconveniences scattered through life, and they are rarer than you think. Watch the happy lovers in the cafés and the streets and the country inns on a beautiful Sunday. Observe for me these large busses, crammed full of grisettes, and driving out to Ranelagh or to Belleville. Count what goes out of the Saint Jacques quarter on any holiday—battalions of milliners, armies of seamstresses, swarms of girls from tobacco shops. All of that enjoys itself, all of it has lovers, all of that alights under the arbors around Paris like so many flights of sparrows. If the weather is bad, all that goes to melodramas and eats oranges and weeps. They eat a great deal and they are always willing to weep, which proves their good characters. But when these poor girls have sewed, basted, hemmed, stitched, and darned all the week, why shouldn't they spend Sunday setting the example of forgetting evil and loving their neighbors? And when a decent man has spent a week dissecting some only slightly agreeable objects, what can he do that is better than freshening up his eyes by looking at a pretty face, a round leg, and the beauties of nature?"

"Whited sepulchres!" Eugène said.

"I said and I still say," Marcel went on, "that one can praise grisettes and that one should do it in moderation. In the first place, they are virtuous, because they spend their days making the most indispensable apparel of modesty. In the second place, they are polite, because there is not a proprietor of a lingerie shop who does not recommend that her girls should speak courteously to her customers. In the third place, they are neat and clean, because they will not be as well paid if they soil the linen they always have in their hands. In the fourth place, they tell the truth, because they drink ratafia. In the fifth place, they are economical and frugal, because they do not earn thirty sous easily, and if they are sometimes greedy and extravagant, it is never with their own money. In the sixth place, they are very gay, because their work is generally frightfully tedious and they frisk like fish in the water as soon as their work is over. Another advantage is that they are never a nuisance, because they spend their lives nailed to one chair, and they can't run after their lovers like ladies of fashion. Moreover, they are not gossips, because they have to count their stitches. They spend very little for shoes, because they walk very little, and not much more for frocks, because shops do not often give them credit. If they can be accused of inconstancy, bad novels and natural wickedness are not the causes—that comes from the large number of people who go into their shops. On the other hand, they prove that they are capable of veritable passions by the large number of them who throw themselves out of the window or into the Seine every day, and the large number who asphyxiate themselves in their domiciles. They have, I admit, the drawback of frequent hunger and thirst, precisely because of their great temperance, but everyone knows that they can satisfy themselves with a glass of beer and a cigarette in place of food—a precious quality not often met in respectable households. In short, I maintain that they are good, lovable, faithful, and disinterested, and that they should not be allowed to end in the almshouse."

Marcel usually said things like this when he was at a café and the wine had heated his head a little. He filled Eugène's glass and urged him to drink to the health of Mademoiselle Pinson, worker in linen, who was their neighbor, but Eugène took up his hat and slipped out while Marcel continued to address his comrades.

A d. Musset

To hold *grave conference with the best tailors in Paris, and to waltz with a genuine marquise were the prize ambitions of Louis Charles Alfred de Musset, one of the most illustrious of French Romantic poets, and the first short story writer ever to create a human being in twelve pages space.*

De Musset, "the Columbus of the Latin Quarter," was a Parisian in birth and art. He was born in 1810 and published his first book of poems when he was twenty, immediately taking his place as an important Romantic voice. He was a much fêted, much imitated, world-weary young man, and he would no doubt have been hopelessly spoiled had it not been for his love affair with George Sand and its tragic ending in a lovers' quarrel at Venice. He had been moved by a real passion and a real despair, and it deepened and enriched all his later work. He died in 1857.

Mademoiselle Pinson was not precisely what is called a pretty woman. There is a difference between a pretty woman and a pretty grisette. If a pretty woman who was so defined in the language of Paris decided to put on a little bonnet, a cotton frock, and a silk apron, people would call her a pretty grisette. But if a grisette muffled herself up in a hat, a velvet cape, and a Palmyre gown, she would not be in the least obliged to become a pretty woman—on the contrary, she would probably look like a coat-rack, and she would be perfectly within her rights. The difference consists in the situation of the two beings, and chiefly in the scrap of twisted cardboard, covered with velvet or silk and called a hat, which women have decided to attach to various sides of their heads—a little in the fashion of the blinkers of a horse. (But one must admit that blinkers prevent a horse from seeing on either side and that the scrap of cardboard obscures nothing.)

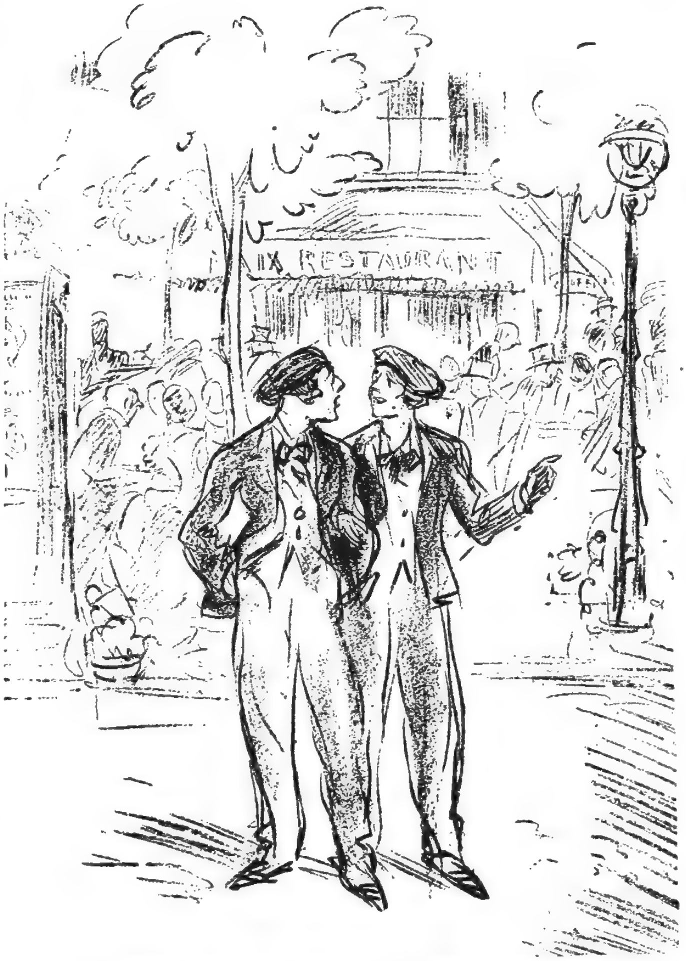
No matter why, a little bonnet authorizes a turned-up nose, which, in its turn, necessitates a well formed mouth, which must be filled with pretty teeth and framed in a round face. A round face asks for shining eyes, which should be as black as possible, and which should shine under beautiful lashes. The hair is *ad libitum,* provided the black eyes make up for everything else. Such an arrangement is far from conventional beauty—it is the classic face of the grisette, who might be ugly beneath the scrap of cardboard but whom the bonnet makes charming, and prettier than mere beauty. Such was Mademoiselle Pinson.

Marcel had decided that Eugène must become the lover of this young lady, for no better reason than that he himself was the adorer of Mademoiselle Zélia, the intimate friend of Mademoiselle Pinson. He found arranging things to his own taste natural and convenient and he considered the creation of love in a friendly fashion also natural and convenient. Such plans are not unusual, and they succeed often enough—since opportunity has always been the strongest of the temptations. Who can say what happiness and unhappiness, what loves and quarrels and joys and despairs have been created by two neighboring doors, a secret stairway, a hall, or a broken pane of glass?

Some characters, nevertheless, refuse to become victims of chance. They insist on conquering their own joys, not winning them in a lottery, and they do not feel disposed to love because they happen to sit beside a pretty woman in a stagecoach. Eugène was one of them, and Marcel knew that he was, but he had formed a plan which was perfectly simple and which he thought would certainly overcome his friend's resistance.

Marcel had decided to give a supper, and he found his own birthday an excellent excuse for it. He had two dozen bottles of beer and a great piece of cold veal with a salad sent to his room, and he bought an enormous cake and a bottle of champagne. He first asked two students, and then he informed Mademoiselle Zélia that there would be a festive occasion at his house in the evening, and that she must bring Mademoiselle Pinson. They were not inclined to miss it. Marcel had every right to his reputation of being one of the Latin Quarter's lights whose invitations were never refused, and seven o'clock had just finished striking when the two grisettes knocked at his door. Mademoiselle Zélia wore a short frock, gray shoes and a bonnet adorned with flowers. Mademoiselle Pinson was more modestly dressed in a black frock which she was never seen without, and which people said gave her the slightly Spanish air of which she was so proud. Neither of them, one may suppose, suspected the designs of their host.

Marcel had not made the mistake of asking Eugène beforehand. He knew that Eugène would have refused, and he waited until the young ladies had emptied their first glass before he begged their permission to go for a guest. When he went into Eugène's room, he found his friend still studying, and after some slight conversation, he gently began his usual reproaches about tiring himself too much and having no amusement, and then he asked Eugène to go for a walk. Eugène really was tired from studying all day, and the two young men went out together. After a few turns in the Luxembourg garden Marcel had no trouble in persuading Eugène to go home with him.



"Look out for these women," he was always saying. "They are dolls made of red-hot iron."

When the two grisettes were left alone, they began by making themselves comfortable, and after they had taken off their shawls and their bonnets they danced together to the music of their own singing—but not without doing the food the honor of trying it now and then. Their eyes and their cheeks were shining when they stopped to receive Eugène's timid and astonished bow. He went about so little that they hardly knew him, and they scrutinized him from his feet to his head in the fashion of their caste before they went on singing and dancing as if nothing had happened. He stepped back, rather disconcerted and probably thinking of escape, but Marcel had locked the door and he threw the key on the table.

"Not another soul!" he cried. "What are our friends doing? But that does not matter since we have captured the savage. Young ladies, I present to you the most virtuous young man in France or Navarre, who has long desired the honor of your acquaintance, and who particularly admires Mademoiselle Pinson."

The song stopped again. Mademoiselle Pinson made a little bow and put her bonnet on again.

"Eugène," Marcel exclaimed, "this is my birthday, and these ladies have kindly come to celebrate it with me. I brought you almost by force, I admit, but I hope that you will stay with a good grace, at our common entreaty. It is not quite eight o'clock, and we have time to smoke a pipe while we wait for our appetites."

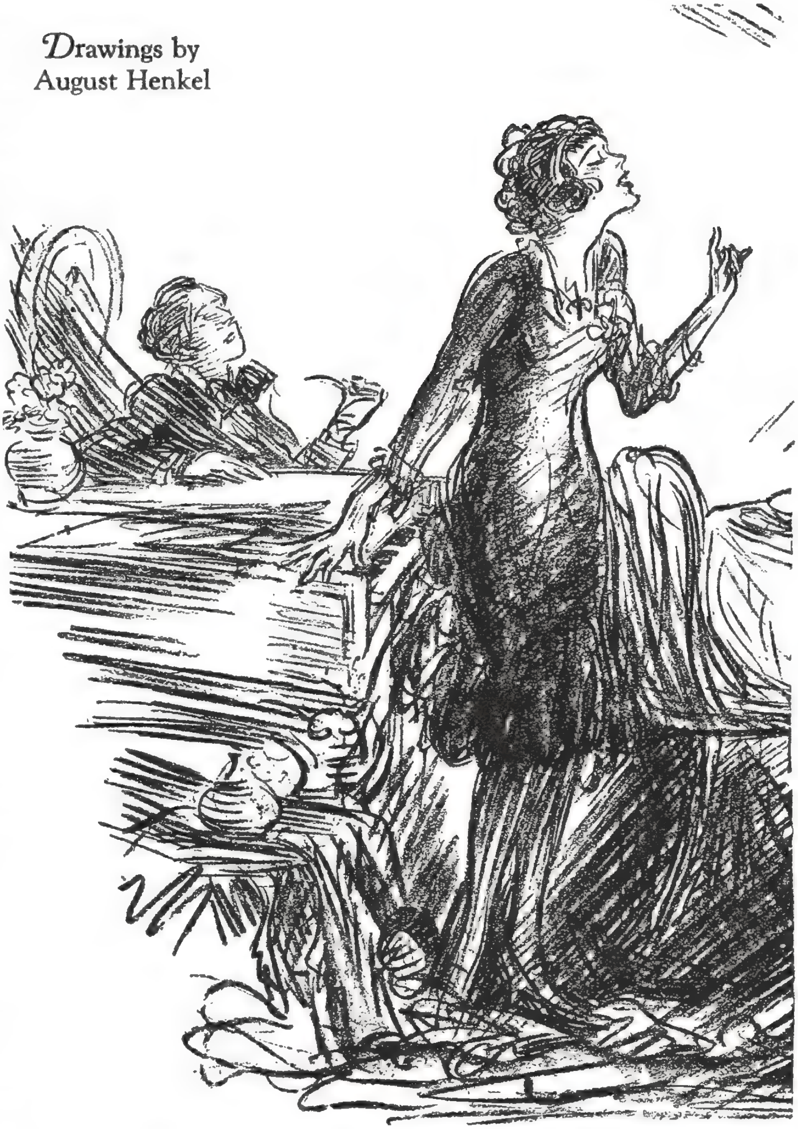
He looked significantly at Mademoiselle Pinson as he spoke, and she bowed again and smiled. "Yes, we beg you," she said in a sweet voice.

Just at that moment the other two students knocked at the door. Eugène saw that he could not leave without being rude, and he gave up and sat down with the others.

The supper was long and noisy. The students first filled the room with smoke, and then drank quite as much as they had smoked to refresh themselves. The ladies undertook the conversation and enlivened the company with pointed stories at the expense of their friends and acquaintances, and with more or less credible adventures they had heard in their work-rooms. If their subjects lacked the appearance of truth, at least they were not dull. Two lawyers' clerks, if one may believe it, had won twenty thousand francs by gambling on the Spanish funds, and they had devoured their winnings in six weeks with two girls from a glove counter. The son of one of the richest bankers in Paris had suggested an opera-box and a country-house to a celebrated seamstress, who had refused them because she preferred to look after her parents and to remain faithful to an admirer at the Deux Magots. A certain personage whom one could not mention and whose rank obliged him to envelop himself in the greatest secrecy, came incognito to call on an embroiderer in the alley that leads to the Pont Neuf, who had been kidnapped by order of some still more exalted being, put in a post-chaise at midnight with a portfolio full of bank-notes, and sent to the United States, and so on.

"That's enough," Marcel said, "we know about all that. Zélia improvises, and as for Mademoiselle Mimi (so Mademoiselle Pinson was called among her intimates) her information is inexact. Your lawyers' clerks won nothing except a sprain from jumping a stream. Your banker offered nothing more than an orange, and your embroiderer is so little in the United States that she can be seen every day between twelve and four at the almshouse, where she has taken lodgings owing to a lack of eatables."

Drawings by
August Henkel



"I'm not old-maidish, but I don't know any troopers' songs."

Eugène was sitting beside Mademoiselle Pinson, and he thought that she turned pale when Marcel pronounced his last word with a complete indifference. But almost immediately she stood up, lit a cigarette, and stopped Marcel with great firmness.

"Silence yourself! I demand the floor. Since the honorable Marcel does not believe fables, I am going to tell a true story, *et quorum pars magna fui.*"

"You speak Latin?" Eugène asked.

"As you see," Mademoiselle Pinson answered. "I inherited that sentence from my uncle who served under the great Napoleon and who never failed to say it before he recited the story of some battle. If you do not know what these words signify, you may learn without paying. They mean 'I give you my word of honor.' You must know, then, that I went to the Odéon only last week with Blanchette and Rougette."

"Wait while I cut the cake," Marcel interrupted her.

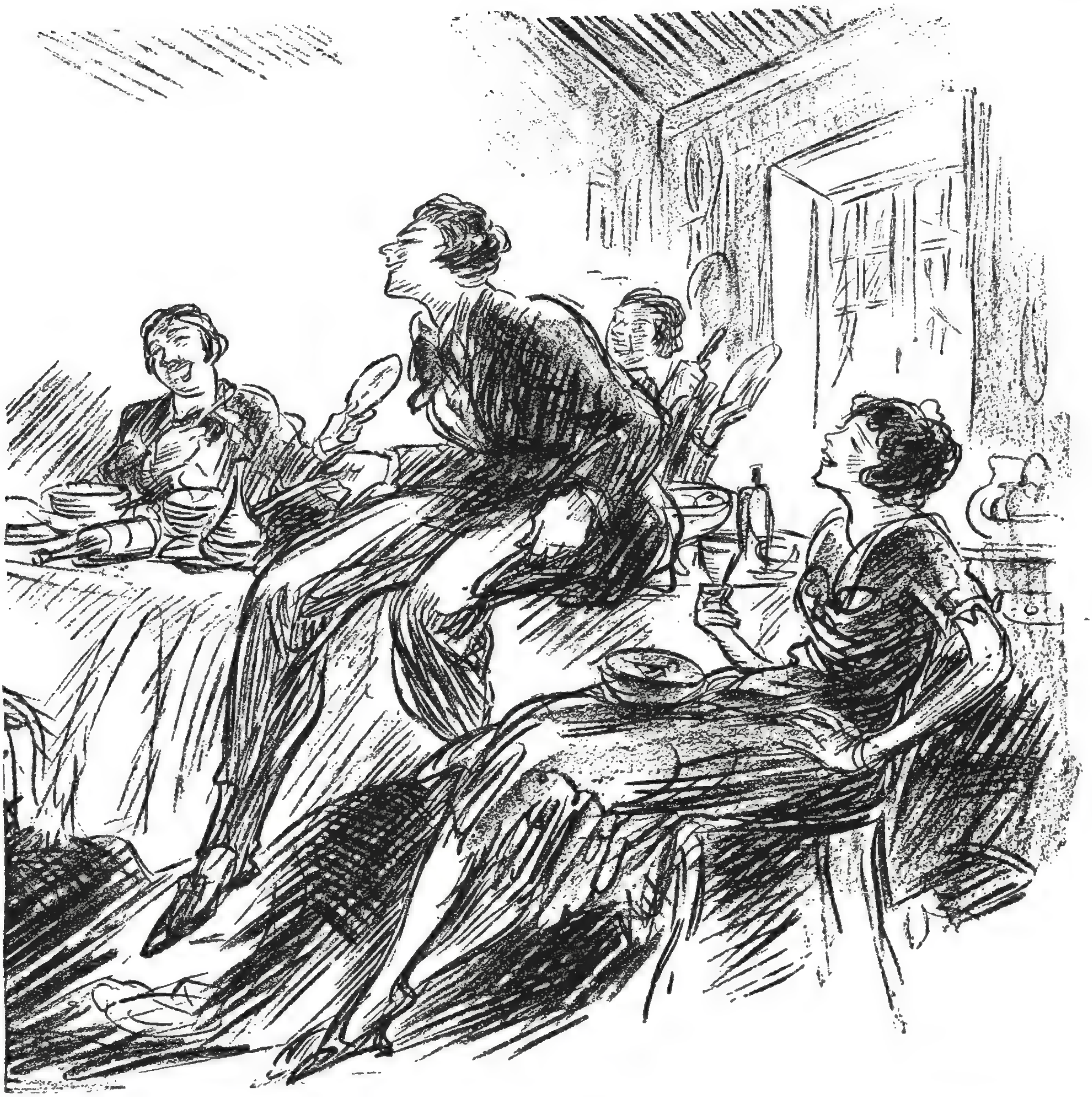
"Cut, but listen," Mademoiselle Pinson continued. "I had gone, then, to see a tragedy at the Odéon with Blanchette and Rougette. Rougette, as you know, has just lost her grandmother, and she inherited four hundred francs from her. We had taken a lower box, and three students who were sitting in the parterre asked us to supper on the pretext that we were alone."

"Point-blank?" Marcel asked. "That was certainly polite. And you refused, I suppose?"

"No," Mademoiselle Pinson told him, "we accepted, and we left during the intermission and went to Viot's."

"With your squires?"

"With our squires. The waiter began by telling us



"We understand," Marcel said. "You are virtue itself. Follow your own inclinations."

that there was nothing left. But a slight difficulty was not going to stop us. We ordered them to hunt the town over for whatever was lacking. Rougette took the pen and ordered a supper fit for a wedding—shrimps, a sweet omelette, fritters, aspics, frozen eggs, everything in the world of pots. Our young strangers, to tell the truth, began to look a little glum."

"I can easily believe it!" Marcel said.

"We paid no attention to it. When they brought the things we began to play the fine lady. Nothing was right, everything made us ill. As soon as they began serving a dish we sent it away and demanded some other. 'Waiter, take that away—it is uneatable—where did you find such horrors?' Our three students wanted to eat everything, but they were not allowed to taste a dish. In short, we supped as Sancho dined, and our rage even led us to break a few dishes."

"Nice behavior! And how did you pay the bill?"

"That is precisely the question the three strangers asked each other. From the conversation they held in a low tone, one of them seemed to possess six francs, the second much less, and the third had only his watch, which he generously took out of his pocket. In this state, the three wretches presented themselves to pay the bill, hoping to get some kind of a delay. What do you think they were told?"

"I think," Marcel answered, "that they kept you as pledges, and that they led you to jail."

"That is not the correct answer," Mademoiselle Pinson answered. "Before we went up, Rougette had arranged everything, and everything was paid in advance. Imagine the theatrical moment when Viot said, 'Gentlemen, everything is already paid.' Three dogs never looked at three bishops as our strangers looked at us—with a pitiful stupefaction mingled with a pure tenderness. We had the air of not seeing their expression, and we had a carriage called. 'Dear marquise,' Rougette said to me, 'we must take these gentlemen home.' 'With pleasure, dear countess,' I answered. Our poor gallants did not know what to say, and you can imagine how sheepish they looked. They resisted our courtesy, and they refused to say where they lived. . . . Naturally! They thought we were ladies of fashion, and *they* lived in the Rue du Chat qui Pêche . . ."

The two students, who had hardly done more than smoke and drink without speaking, seemed very slightly pleased with the story. Their faces darkened, and perhaps they knew as much as Mademoiselle Pinson did about that unlucky supper, because they looked at her uneasily when Marcel laughed and asked who the three gallants were.

"Take off their masks, Mademoiselle Mimi. Since it happened last week that can't bother them."

"Never, gentlemen," the grisette said. "One can make a man ridiculous, but one must never injure his career."

"You are right," Eugène said, "and perhaps you are wiser than you realize. There is hardly one of the students in these schools who has not some folly behind him. Nevertheless, all that is most respected in France come out of them—doctors, magistrates . . ."

. . . "Yes," Marcel said, "that is true. There are future peers of France who dine at Flicoteaux's and who can't always pay their bills. But," he added, with a wink of his eye, "haven't you seen your unknown admirers again?"

"What do you take us for?" Mademoiselle Pinson asked seriously and almost angrily. "Don't you know Blanchette and Rougette? and do you suppose that I myself . . ."

"It's all right," Marcel said, "don't get in a rage. But that's a fine lot. Three foolish girls who hadn't enough money to pay for their dinner the next day, and who threw everything they had out of the window to mystify three poor devils!"

"Why did they ask us to supper?" Mademoiselle Pinson retorted.

THE UNIQUE BOTTLE of champagne appeared with the cake and composed the whole dessert. When they began drinking they began talking of songs. "I see," said Marcel, "I see, as Cervantes said, that Zélia is coughing. It is her sign that she is ready to sing. But it is my birthday, and if these gentlemen agree with me, I will beg Mademoiselle Mimi to honor us with a couplet unless she is hoarse from her story. Eugène, be gallant for once. Drink with your neighbor and ask her to sing a couplet for me."

Eugène blushed and obeyed. Since Mademoiselle Pinson had not disdained to beg him to stay on, he bowed and said to her timidly, "We beg you, mademoiselle."

As he said that, he raised his glass and touched his neighbor's. From this slight blow, a delicate, silvery tone floated out. Mademoiselle Pinson seized the note on the wing and sang a long trill on it in a clear voice.

"Very well," she said, "I consent, since my glass gave me the 'la.' But what would you like me to sing? I'm not old-maidish, but I don't know any troopers' songs. I do not vulgarize my memory."

"We understand," Marcel said. "You are virtue itself. Follow your own inclinations, since opinions at least have their liberty."

"Very well," Mademoiselle Pinson answered, "I will sing some verses that were written about me."

"Listen to her! Who is the author?"

"The other girls in the shop. It is poetry composed to the needle. I beg your indulgence for it."

"Has your song a chorus?"

"Of course! That's a fine question."

"In that case," Marcel commanded, "we will take our knives, and strike the table with them during the chorus. But we must try to beat in time with each other. Zélia can refrain if she likes."

"And why, wretched boy?" Zélia asked angrily.

"For a good reason," he answered. "But if you want to be in the game, beat with a cork—that will be more agreeable for our ears and for your white hands."

Marcel had seated himself in the middle of the table with his knife in his hand and the glasses and plates arranged around him. The two students who had been Rougette's guests at supper had cheered up enough to take the bowls off their pipes so that they could beat time with the stems. Eugène was dreaming, and Zélia was sulking. Mademoiselle Pinson picked up a plate and asked by a sign if she might break it. Marcel answered with a gesture of consent, and the singer took the two pieces for castanets and began the verses that her companions had written, after excusing herself in advance for whatever might be too flattering to her.

Mimi Pinson, she is fair;
Blond and beautiful is she;
Just one dress, so debonair,
  One bonnet, see!
Poorer wardrobe were a shame,
So God wills it, in such fashion
To give Mimi a good name,
For she can not pledge the same,
This dress of Mimi Pinson.
  Landerirette!

Mimi Pinson wears a rose
Whiter than her pretty face;
In her heart its leaves disclose
What life and grace!
When her supper gives her cheer,
Then she sings *la chanson*
Quaffing wine or only beer,
While there hangs above her ear
Her bonnet, Mimi Pinson.
  Landerirette!

Sharpest eyes I do attest
And with hands concealed by day
In the wide sleeves of her vest
She stands at bay—
Not maltreating anyone,
But giving him a lesson
Better taught than at Sorbonne—
Do not rumple that chiffon,

That dress of Mimi Pinson.
Landerirette!

A virgin—yes, she may remain so,
If God wills it, to the end,
With her implement to sew
At finger-end;
No fear of earning daily bread.
He must be a fine garçon
Who wins her, and be honest bred—
Not very distant from her head
Her bonnet, Mimi Pinson.
Landerirette!

With a wreath of orange flower
If to crown her love sees fit,
She has something, a rare dower,
To give for it—
But do not in haste divine
Blazoning of escutcheon—
It hides something still more fine,
Something neither yours nor mine,
The dress of Mimi Pinson.
Landerirette!

Mimi has no common soul—
Hers a democratic heart;
In the ranks she did enroll,
In war took part.
She had made, in place of blade,
A spear out of a bodkin.
A lovely sentinel she made.
Lucky, who places his cockade
On the toque of Mimi Pinson.
Landerirette!

The knives and the pipes and even the chairs had made the proper disturbance at the end of each verse. The glasses danced on the table and the half-empty bottles rolled around joyfully and gave each other little nudges.

"And your dear friends wrote that song?" Marcel said. "It's been too well dyed—there's nothing left of the original color. I prefer the good old songs that say something." And he intoned in his strong voice,

"Nanette was not yet quite fifteen . . ."

"Enough, enough," Mademoiselle Pinson said. "Can't one of you play for us to dance?"

"I have just what you need," Marcel told her, "I have a guitar. But," as he took it down from the wall, "the guitar hasn't what it needs. It is bald from the loss of three strings."

"But you have a piano," Zélia said, "you can play for us."

Marcel looked at his mistress as furiously as if she had accused him of some crime. He did know a few dances, but playing them was a torture that he never willingly suffered. Zélia was revenging herself for the cork.

"Are you mad?" Marcel asked her. "You know perfectly well that this piano is only here to add its magnificence to the room, and that you are the only person who can get a sound out of it. Where did you get the idea that I can play dances, when I can only play the 'Marseillaise' with one finger? If you should ask Eugène, you would find that he is the musician, but I won't ask him, because I don't want to bore him with playing. No one except you would do anything so indiscreet without warning."

For the third time, Eugène blushed and did what Marcel asked him to do in his polite, indirect fashion. He sat down at the piano, and a quadrille began.

THE DANCING LASTED nearly as long as the supper. After the quadrille came a waltz, and after the waltz a galop, since they still galop in the Latin Quarter. The ladies were particularly indefatigable, and they waked the neighborhood with their gambols and their shouts of laughter. Eugène was worn out by his evening's work and by the noise, and he began to play mechanically, half-asleep, like a postilion on his horse. The dancers passed and repassed him like phantoms in a dream, and since no one becomes melancholy as easily as a man who is watching other people laugh, and since he was naturally melancholy, he began to think gloomy thoughts. "Poor happiness, wretched pleasures! they fly away to misery the moment one begins to think. And as Marcel said, who knows that these five people who are leaping about so gaily are sure of having dinner tomorrow?"

As he made this reflection, Mademoiselle Pinson danced by him, and he thought that she slipped a piece of the cake into her pocket as she passed the table.

Day was breaking when Marcel's supper was over, and Eugène walked about the streets for some time before he went back to his room. Still continuing his gloomy thoughts, he sang a verse of the grisette's song in a whisper:

Just one dress, so debonair,
One bonnet, see!

"Can that be true?" he asked himself. "Can poverty show itself so frankly and laugh at itself? Can one laugh at one's own hunger?"

The piece of cake left no doubt of it. Eugène smiled at the same time that he could have wept from pity. "But she took the cake," he thought, "not the bread. Perhaps she is a little pig, or perhaps she took it for some neighbor's child, or for a gossiping Cerberus of a concierge who might tell people that Mademoiselle Pinson had stayed out all night unless she was appeased."

Eugène had been walking along without seeing where he was going, and he had happened into that labyrinth of little streets behind the Carrefour Bucy, where a carriage can hardly pass. Just as he was turning back a woman in an old dressing-gown and with her hair in disorder around her pale face came out of one of the houses. She seemed to be so weak that she could scarcely walk. Her knees bent and she leaned against the walls as she went toward a letter-box to drop in a note that she had in her hand. Eugène was astonished and frightened, but he went up to her and asked her what she was looking for and if he could help her. He held her up when she almost fell, but she drew herself away from him with a sort of fear and pride. She laid down her note, pointed to the letter-box, and gathered up strength enough to say just one word. "There," she said, and turned back to the house she had come from, still supporting herself against the walls. Eugène could not persuade her to take his arm or to answer his questions, and she went slowly back down the dark narrow alley.

Eugène had picked up her letter and he had taken a step or two toward the box when he stopped. This strange meeting had troubled him so much, and he felt so much horror and so much sympathy, that he opened the letter before he had time to realize what he was doing. It seemed to him that he must use any means of penetrating such a mystery. Evidently this woman was dying either of some illness or of hunger, and from poverty in either case. Eugène unfolded the letter which was addressed "To the Baron de G——."

> Read this letter, and do not refuse my prayers. You can save me, and you only. Believe what I tell you, and save me, and you will have done a kind deed that will bring you happiness. I have just been very ill, and I have lost all my strength and my courage. I go back to the shop in August, my clothes are being held in my old lodgings, and I am almost certain that I shall be turned into the street before Saturday. I am so afraid of starving that this morning I decided to throw myself in the river, since I had eaten nothing for twenty-four hours. But when I thought of you, a little hope came back into my heart. I did not deceive myself, did I? I beg you on my knees to help me live at least a few days more. I am afraid to die, and I am only twenty-three years old. With a little help, I may manage to hold out until the first of the month. If I knew the words that would excite your pity I would say them, but nothing comes into my mind. I can only weep over my own weakness, because I am afraid that you will treat my letter as people who are always receiving them do treat such letters. You will tear it up without realizing that a poor woman is waiting and hoping that you will not be able to leave her in suspense. I know that a louis is very little to you, and I think you will fold it in a sheet of paper and address it to Mademoiselle Bertin, Rue de l'Éperon. I changed my name when I began to work in the shops, because my name is my mother's name. As you go out of your house, you can give the paper to your porter. I will wait Wednesday and Thursday, and I shall pray fervently that God will make you kind.
>
> Perhaps you will not believe that such poverty is possible, but if you saw me you would be convinced.
>
> ROUGETTE.

Eugène was touched when he read the letter, but he was astonished when he read the signature. This Rougette must be the same girl who had spent her money giving parties, and who had planned the ridiculous supper that Mademoiselle Pinson had told them about, and now she had come to this wretchedness and to such a letter. Such improvidence and such folly seemed an incredible dream to Eugène, but the signature was there and Mademoiselle Pinson had mentioned that her friend Rougette had become Mademoiselle Bertin. How had she suddenly found herself abandoned, helpless, without food, and almost homeless? What were her friends doing while she was dying in some attic of this house? And what kind of a house was it where she could be left to die?

This was not the moment for conjectures. He must do something for her.

Eugène went into a little restaurant that had just opened, and bought what he found there. He walked back to Rougette's house with the waiter, but he was ashamed to go in himself. The poor girl's pride made him fear that she would be hurt, even if she did not end by refusing his help. He could not tell her that he had read her letter.

"Do you know a certain Mademoiselle Bertin who lives in this house?" he asked the waiter when they had reached the door.

"Very well, sir!" the waiter answered. "We very often bring her orders. But she is in the country now."

"Who told you that she was?" Eugène asked.

"The concierge here, sir. Mademoiselle Rougette is very fond of good food, but she isn't fond of paying for it. She orders roast chickens and lobsters, but you have to come back more than once to see her money. And, besides, in the Quarter we know when she is here and when she is not . . ."

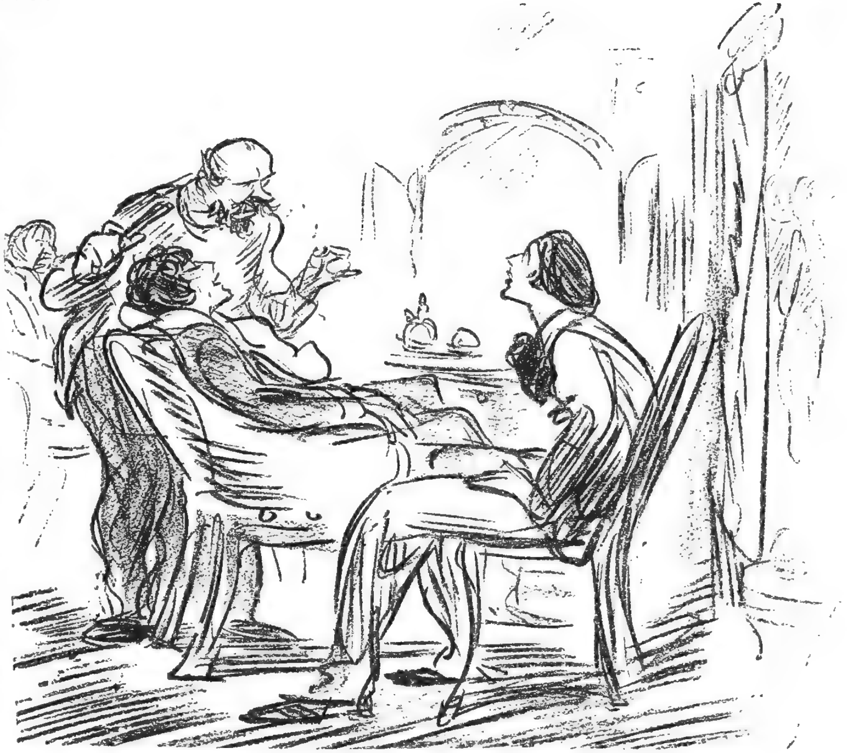
"She is back," Eugène interrupted. "Go up to her room, leave what you have and if she owes you money do not ask for it today. That will be my business, and I will come back. If she asks who sent you, tell her Baron de G——."

With these words, Eugène took himself off. As he walked along, he sealed Rougette's letter again and dropped it in a box. "After all," he thought, "Rougette will not refuse. And if she finds the answer to her note a little too prompt, she can ask the baron to explain that."

LIKE GRISETTES, students are not rich every day. Eugène knew quite well that he should have sent the louis by the waiter if he expected Rougette to believe his little fable, but the louis is not precisely the common currency of the Rue Saint Jacques. Moreover, Eugène had promised to pay Rougette's bill at the restaurant and unfortunately his drawer did not happen to be any better furnished than his pocket that day. That is why he went straight to the Place du Panthéon.

The famous hair-dresser who managed to ruin himself and other people at the same time still had his shop in the Place last year. Large and small usury was carried on in the back of his shop, and the students who were poor and improvident, and who were probably in love, came every day to borrow a few francs which they spent gaily in the evening and payed back with enormous interest afterwards. Grisettes slipped in, ashamed to be caught renting a faded hat for a day in the country, or a dyed shawl, or a chemise bought at a pawnshop. Youths of good families, who needed twenty-five louis, signed notes for two or three thousand francs, minors ate up their inheritances, and giddy boys ruined their families and their own futures. From the titled courtesan whose head can be turned by a bracelet to the needy scholar who hankers after an old book or a plate of beans, everything came there just as everything went to the fountain of Pactolus, and the usurious hair-dresser boasted of his clients and his exploits and entertained the Clichy prison while he was waiting to go there himself.

This was the forlorn hope to which Eugène found himself reduced if he must find the money to help



"Why should you trouble yourself since she has a baron?"

Rougette. He could not be sure that the baron would help her, and although a student was doing something unusual when he undertook to help a girl he did not even know, Eugène believed in God, and every kind action seemed to him a work of necessity.

The first person he saw when he went into the shop was Marcel, seated in front of a dressing-table with a towel around his neck as if he were having his hair done. Perhaps the poor boy had come because he needed money to pay for his supper. He looked worried, and frowned while the hair-dresser passed a cold iron over his hair and whispered to him in his Gascon accent. Another young man, equally muffled up in his towel, was sitting before another dressing-table and looking distractedly from one side to the other, and through the door one could see the reflection of a passably thin girl whom the hair-dresser's wife was helping to try on a plaid frock.

"What are you doing here at this hour?" called out Marcel, whose face took on its usual good-humored expression when he recognized his friend.

Eugène sat down near him and explained his encounter and what he had done and what he was proposing to do.

"You are certainly simple," Marcel said. "Why should you trouble yourself since she has a baron? You saw an interesting girl who showed the need of taking nourishment. You bought her a cold chicken, which was worthy of you, and requires no apology. You did not ask gratitude, and you enjoyed playing the unknown, which is heroic. But to do anything more is positively chivalrous, and in the memory of man, no one has pawned his watch for a seamstress who is protected by a baron, except in the Blue Library."

"Laugh if you like," Eugène answered. "I know there are more troubles in the world than I can cure. I pity those that I do not know, but if I see one, I must do what I can. I cannot remain indifferent in the face of suffering. I am not rich enough to go about looking for the poor, but when I find them, I give them something."

"In that case, you have enough to do. Poor people are not rare in this country," Marcel said.

"What of that?" Eugène said, still distressed by what he had just seen. "Do you think I should walk by and leave people to die? This girl is a giddy fool, anything you like, and perhaps she does not deserve the compassion I feel for her, but I still feel it. Would you like to have me imitate the dear friends who helped her to get rid of her money and who do not seem any more concerned about her than if she were no longer in the world? To whom can she go? To some stranger who will light his cigar with her letter, or perhaps to this Mademoiselle Pinson who goes out to supper and dances merrily while her friend is starving? I admit to you, Marcel, that all this horrifies me. I can't bear to think of that flippant little thing who sang and joked at the very minute when the heroine of her story was dying in a garret. To live together like friends, almost like sisters, in and out of theaters and dance-halls and cafés, and not to know the next day whether the other is dead or alive—that is worse than selfishness, worse than the insensibility of animals. Your Mademoiselle Pinson is a monster, and I know no one worse than these shameless, soulless grisettes whom you praise!"

The hair-dresser, who had silently gone on running his cold iron over Marcel's head during this conversation, smiled slyly when Eugène had finished. He chattered like a magpie or like the hair-dresser that he was when his clients were talking scandal, but when they were discussing business, he was as taciturn and laconic as a Spartan until his interlocutor had revealed himself. The indignation that Eugène expressed so violently made him break his silence.

"You are severe, sir," he said, laughing and Gasconning. "I have the honor of dressing Mademoiselle Mimi's hair, and I think her an excellent person."

"Yes," Eugène said, "excellent indeed in matters of drinking and smoking."

"Possibly," the hair-dresser answered. "I do not say you are wrong. These girls laugh and drink and smoke, but they are not all heartless."

"What are you getting at, Father Cadédis?" Marcel asked. "Not so much diplomacy. Come to the point."

"This is what I am getting at," the hair-dresser answered, waving towards the back of his shop. "In there, hanging on a hook, I have a little black silk frock that you gentlemen would doubtless recognize, since you know its owner, and since she has not a very elaborate wardrobe. Mademoiselle Mimi sent me this frock at daybreak, so even if she has not come to Rougette's rescue she is not precisely rolling in wealth herself."

"That is strange," Marcel said, walking into the room at the back of the shop without considering the poor woman in the plaid gown. "Mimi's song was a false prophecy, since she has pawned her frock after all. But what the devil will she go about in today?"

Eugène had followed his friend.

The hair-dresser was not deceiving them. Mademoiselle Pinson's unique gown was hanging humbly and sadly in a dusty corner.

"That is indeed her frock," Marcel said. "I have known this garment intimately since I saw it quite new, a year and a half ago. It is the dressing-gown, the riding-habit and the dress uniform of Mademoiselle Mimi. There should be a spot the size of five sous on the left sleeve, and it was caused by drinking champagne. How much did you lend on it, Father Cadédis? At least I suppose she did not sell her frock, and that it is here only as security."

"I lent her four francs," the hair-dresser answered, "and I assure you, sir, that it was pure charity. I would not have lent anyone else more than forty sous. The silk is damnably shabby—it is like a magic lantern if you hold it up to the light. But I am sure that Mademoiselle Mimi will pay me. She is good for four francs."

"Poor Mimi!" Marcel said, "I will bet you my cap that she borrowed it for Rougette."

"Or to pay some pressing debt," Eugène said.

"No," Marcel said, "I know Mimi, and I think her incapable of stripping herself for a creditor."

"You are probably right," the hair-dresser said. "I knew Mademoiselle Mimi when her situation was much better than it is now, and she had a great many debts. Every day, one of her creditors had something seized, and they ended by taking all of her furniture except her bed, which, as you gentlemen doubtless know, a creditor is not allowed to seize. Mademoiselle Mimi had four very becoming frocks at that time. She put them on one over the other, and went to bed in all of them so that they would not be seized. That is why I should be surprised to discover that she has pawned her only frock to pay a creditor."

"Poor Mimi!" Marcel said again. "But how is she managing? Has she some other garment that she has concealed from her friends? Perhaps she is ill from too much cake, and then she does not need to dress herself. No matter, Father Cadédis; this frock grieves me, with its sleeves hanging down supplicatingly. Take back four francs of the thirty-five livres you have just lent me, and wrap up the frock so that I can take it to this child. Now then, Eugène, what does your Christian charity say to that?"

"That you are right to do as you are doing," Eugène answered, "but that I am not necessarily wrong. I will make a bet with you, if you like."

"Taken," Marcel said, "we will bet a cigar, as the members of the Jockey Club do. Moreover, you have nothing more to do here. I have thirty-one francs, so we are rich. Let us go to Mademoiselle Pinson. I am curious to see her." He took the frock under his arm, and they left the shop.

"MADEMOISELLE has gone to mass," the concierge told the two students when they arrived at the residence of Mademoiselle Pinson.

"To mass!" Eugene exclaimed.

"To mass!" Marcel echoed. "That is impossible. She has not gone out. Let us go up, we are friends."

"I assure you, sir," the concierge answered, "that she went out to mass about three-quarters of an hour ago."

"And to what church did she go?"

"To Saint Sulpice, where she always goes. She never misses a morning."

"Yes, yes, I know that she prays to the good God, but I think her going out today is rather bizarre."

"There she is coming back, sir. She is turning into the street. You can see her yourself."

Mademoiselle Pinson was indeed returning from church. As soon as Marcel saw her he ran toward her to see her costume more closely. Instead of a frock she was wearing a dark cotton petticoat half hidden by a green woolen curtain that she had made into a fairly successful shawl. This unusual apparel excited no attention, because it was dark, and her head in its charming little white bonnet and her little feet in their slippers came out of it very prettily. She had draped her curtain so cleverly that its borders hardly showed, and it really looked like an old shawl. In a word, she was still delightful in her rag-bag, and she gave this earth one more proof that a pretty woman is always pretty.

"How do you like me?" she asked the two young men, turning her curtain a little and letting them see her fine figure in its corset. "This is a morning frock that Palmyre has just brought me."

"You look charming," Marcel told her. "I could never have believed that anyone could look so well in a window's shawl."

"Really?" Mademoiselle Pinson said. "I think I must look rather like a parcel."

"A parcel of roses," Marcel answered. "I am almost sorry now that I brought your frock."

"My frock? Where did you find it?"

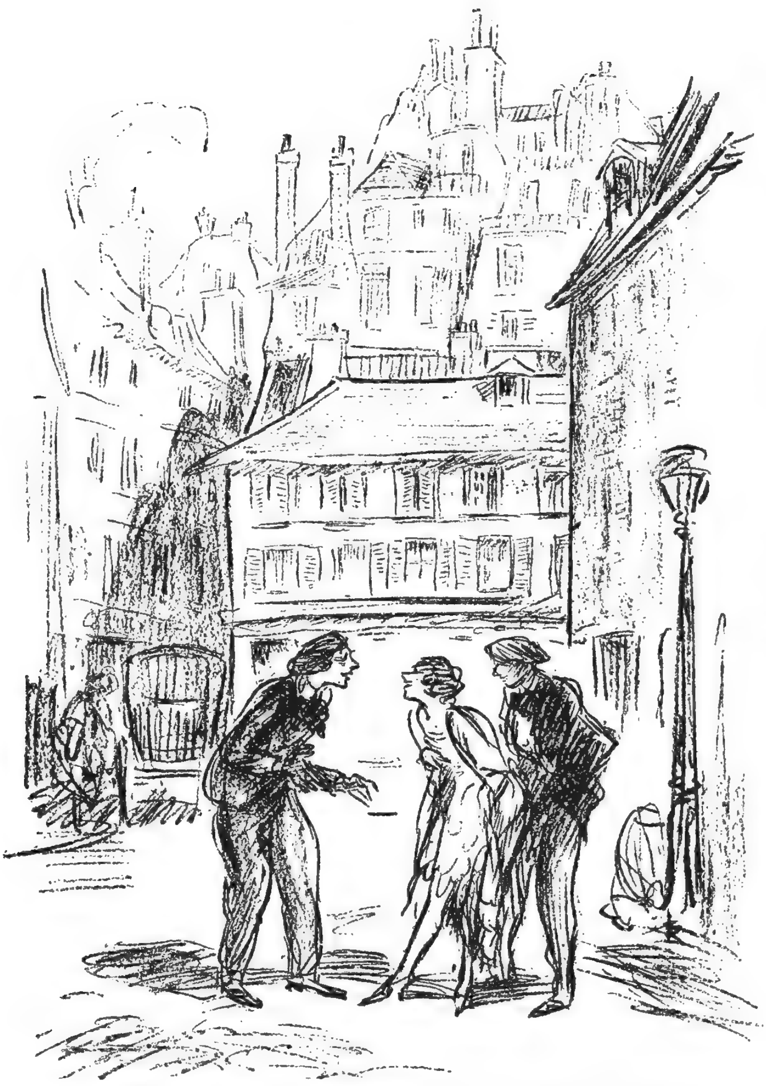
"Where it was, apparently."

"And you rescued it from slavery?"

"God, yes, I paid its ransom. Are you annoyed by my audacity?"

"Far from it! I am in your debt until I can return the compliment. I am glad to have my frock. To tell you the truth, we have lived together so long that I have unconsciously attached myself to it."

While she was chattering, Mademoiselle Pinson was climbing the five flights that led to her little room, and the two friends went in with her.



"I could never have believed," Marcel told her, "that anyone could look so charming in a window curtain."

"I am giving you back your frock on one condition only," Marcel said.

"Fie on you!" the grisette said. "How silly to make conditions! I refuse to have them."

"I made a bet," Marcel explained. "You must tell us truthfully why you pawned it."

"Let me put it on before I tell you," Mademoiselle Pinson requested. "But I warn you that if you do not wish to make my wardrobe or the eaves into a waiting-room, you must veil your faces like Agamemnon while I get into it."

"That isn't necessary," Marcel said. "We are more honorable than people suppose, and I will not open even one eye."

"Wait a minute," Mademoiselle Pinson answered. "I have every confidence in you, but the wisdom of the ages tells us that two precautions are better than one."

At the same time she slipped out of her curtain and threw it over the heads of the two friends so neatly that they were entirely blind.

"Don't move," she said. "I won't be a minute."

"Be careful," Marcel said. "If there is a hole in the curtain, I refuse to be responsible. You were not satisfied with our word, and consequently we consider it redeemed."

"Happily my frock is also," Mademoiselle Pinson said. "And so am I," she added, laughing and throwing the curtain on the floor. "Poor little frock, it seems quite new again. I like feeling myself back inside it."

"Now you must tell us the secret. Be honest, we are no gossips. Why did a prudent, sober, virtuous and modest young person like you pull down her whole wardrobe from the hook with one jerk?"

"Why? . . . Why?" Mademoiselle Pinson answered, seeming to hesitate. Then she took each of the youths by an arm and pushed them through the door. "Come and see." As Marcel expected, she took them to the Rue de l'Éperon.

MARCEL WON HIS BET. Mademoiselle Pinson's piece of cake and her four francs were on Rougette's table with what was left of Eugène's chicken. The sick girl was a little better, but she was still in bed, and however grateful she might be toward her unknown benefactor, she had her friend tell the young gentlemen that she begged them to excuse her being too ill to receive them.

"How much that is like her!" Marcel said. "If she were dying alone in her garret, she would still play the duchess for the benefit of her water-jug."

The two friends were regretfully obliged to go home as they had come, not without laughing at such pride and such propriety so oddly lodged under a roof.

They dined together after their day at the medical college, and after dinner they walked along the Boulevard des Italiens.

"After all that," Marcel asked, "won't you agree that I have some reason to love these poor creatures, and even to esteem them? Consider it seriously from a philosophical point of view. Didn't this little Mimi, whom you slandered so basely, do a more worthy deed when she stripped herself of her frock than good King Robert did when he let the poor man cut off the fringe of his mantle? For one thing, good King Robert evidently had quantities of mantles, and for another thing, he was at dinner when a beggar crawled up to him and cut off the gold fringe. Her majesty the queen did not approve of what the beggar had done, and nevertheless the king pardoned the clipper of fringes; but perhaps he had enjoyed his dinner.

Consider the distance between him and Mimi! When Mimi heard of Rougette's misfortunes she had not breakfasted, for you may be sure that the piece of cake she took with her was intended to compose her own repast. Now, what did she do? Instead of breakfasting, she went to mass and showed herself at least the equal of King Robert, who was undoubtedly extremely pious, but who wasted his time chanting while the Normans played the devil. King Robert gave up his fringe and kept his mantle. Mimi sent her whole frock to Father Cadédis, and that was an incomparable deed, because Mimi is a woman, and she is young, and pretty, and fond of pretty frocks, and poor. Do not forget, moreover, that her frock is necessary if she goes to the shop to earn her daily bread. She not only gave up the piece of cake she was about to swallow, but also voluntarily put herself in the way of having no dinner. Realize also that Father Cadédis is far from being a beggar, and from crawling under tables. King Robert made no great sacrifice when he gave up his fringe, because it was cut before he saw the beggar, and no one knows that it wasn't cut too badly to be sewed on again; but Mimi did not wait for her frock to be stolen. She snatched it from her poor body, although it was more precious and more useful than the glittering productions of all the lace-makers and embroiderers in Paris. She went out dressed in a curtain, but be sure that she would have gone only to church. She would cut off an arm rather than be seen in the Luxembourg or the Tuileries tied up like that, but she dared show herself to God, because she prays at that hour every day. You must believe, Eugène, that when she wore her curtain through the Place Saint Michel, the Rue de Tournon and the Rue du Petit Lion, where she knows everyone, she showed more courage, more humility and more true religion than there is in all those hymns of good King Robert's that the world has been talking about from the day of the great Bossuet to the day of the depressing Anquetil; and nevertheless, Mimi will die unknown up in her room on some fifth floor, between a pot of flowers and a hem."

"So much better for her," Eugène said.

"If I wished to go on with my comparisons," Marcel said, "I could draw a parallel between Mucius Scævola and Rougette. Do you suppose that a Roman of Nero's time suffered any more when he held his arm over a brazier for five minutes than a contemporary grisette suffered from fasting twenty-four hours? Neither of them cried out, but examine their reasons. Mucius was in the midst of a camp and in the presence of the Etruscan king he had tried to kill. He had failed pitiably and he was in the hands of the police. What did he think up? A piece of bravado. Simply to be admired before he was hanged, he reddened his fist over a brazier, and there is nothing to prove that the brazier was very hot or that his fist fell down in ashes. Thereupon, the worthy Porsena was stupefied by his braggadocio and pardoned him and sent him home. No doubt the said Porsena, who was capable of such a pardon, had a good face, and Scævola suspected that he would save his head by sacrificing his arm. Rougette, on the contrary, patiently endured hunger, which is the slowest and the most horrible torture, and no one was watching her. Why, then, suffer without murmuring? From vanity, in the first place, but Mucius was no better. From greatness of soul, in the next place, and that is her glory. She was dumb behind her bolted door, so that her friends would not know she was dying, so that they would not have pity for her courage, and so that her devoted comrade Pinson would not be obliged to part with her frock and her cake. If Mucius had been in Rougette's place, he would have pretended to die in silence, but he would have done it at a crossing or at Flicoteaux's door. His silent and sublime pride would have been one way of asking assistance. And do not think you can answer with that vain objection people make to all the admirable actions of women when they say that women do not know what they are doing, and that they run after danger as cats run on eaves. Rougette knows what death is. She was near it at the Pont d'Iéna. She has already jumped into the Seine once, and I asked her if she suffered. She said that she felt nothing until the boatman who fished her out scraped her head against their boat."

"That's quite enough," Eugène said. "Spare me your frightful pleasantries. Answer me seriously. Do you think that these horrible ordeals which are constantly repeated and constantly threatening, finally have some result? Have these poor unprotected girls enough good sense to learn something from experience? Can they come to any good end, in spite of their follies, or is there a demon that vows them to eternal frivolity and misery? One of them prays, you say. She goes to church, fulfills her duties, and lives respectably by her own work. Her friends seem to respect her, and even you bad characters do not treat her with your usual lightness. Another passes unceasingly from follies to want, from prodigality to the horrors of hunger. Surely she will remember this cruel lesson a long time. Do you think that with good advice, carefully regulated conduct, and a little help, one could make rational beings of such women? If you do think so, tell me. An opportunity is offered to us. Let us go back to this wretched Rougette. She is doubtless still in bed, and her old friend is watching beside her. I would like to lead them back into the right path, to speak sincerely to them. I would not preach to them, but I would walk up to this bed and take both their hands, and I would say to them . . ."

The two friends were just passing Tortoni's. The profiles of two women who were eating ices near a window stood out in the light of the chandeliers. One waved her handkerchief and the other laughed gaily.

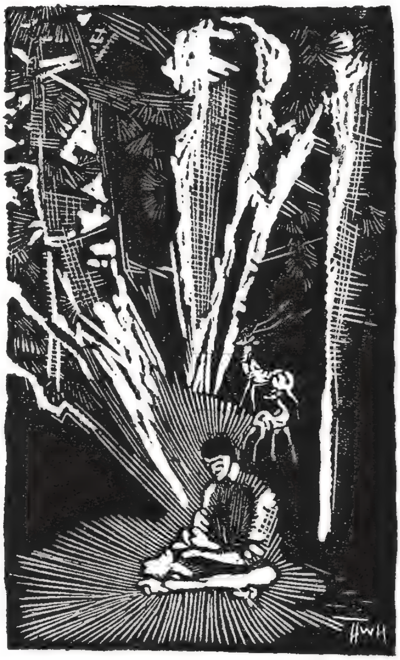
"God!" Marcel exclaimed. "If you still want to talk to them, we need not go far. There they are, God forgive me! I recognize Mimi's frock, and that white feather of Rougette's is always waving above ambrosia. Apparently the baron has arranged matters."

"And doesn't such folly frighten you?" Eugène asked.

"It does," Marcel said, "but when you speak severely of grisettes, make an exception of the little Pinson, I beg you. She told us a good story at supper, she pawned her frock for four francs, and she made herself a shawl of a curtain. And whoever tells what he knows, gives what he has, and does what he can, is not obliged to do more."

A Fickle Widow

An anonymous Chinese writer of the Fifteenth Century expresses his opinion of women in a satiric story



Woodcut by Helen West Heller.

At a distance from the capital, and in the peaceful retirement of the country, there dwelt many centuries ago a philosopher named Chwang, who led a pleasurable existence in the society of his third wife, and in the study of the doctrines of his great master, Lao-tsze. Like many philosophers, Chwang had not been fortunate in his early married life. His first wife died young; his second he found it necessary to divorce, on account of misconduct; but in the companionship of the Lady T'ien he enjoyed a degree of happiness which had previously been denied him. Being a philosopher, however, he found it essential to his peace that he should occasionally exchange his domestic surroundings for the hillsides and mountain solitudes. On one such expedition he came unexpectedly on a newly-made grave at the side of which was seated a young woman dressed in mourning, who was gently fanning the new mound. So strange a circumstance was evidently one into which a philosopher should inquire. He therefore approached the lady, and in gentle accents said, "May I ask what you are doing?"

"Well," replied the lady, "the fact is that this grave contains my husband. And, stupid man, just before he died he made me promise that I would not marry again until the soil above his grave should be dry. I watched it for some days, but it got dry so very slowly that I am fanning it to hasten the process." So saying she looked up into Chwang's face with so frank and engaging a glance that the philosopher at once decided to enlist himself in her service.

"Your wrists are not strong enough for such work," he said. "Let me relieve you at it."

"By all means," replied the lady briskly. "Here is the fan, and I shall owe you an everlasting debt of gratitude if you will fan it dry as quickly as possible."

Without more ado, Chwang set to work, and by the exercise of his magical powers he extracted every drop of moisture from the grave with a few waves of the fan. The lady was delighted with his success, and with the sunniest smile said, "How can I thank you sufficiently for your kindness! As a small mark of my gratitude, let me present you with this embroidered fan which I had in reserve; and as a token of my esteem, I really must ask you to accept one of my silver hairpins." With these words she presented the philosopher with the fan, and drawing out one of her ornamented hairpins, she offered it for his acceptance. The philosopher took the fan, but, possibly having the fear of Lady T'ien before his eyes, he declined the pin. The incident made him thoughtful, and as he seated himself again in his thatched hall, he sighed deeply.

"Why are you sighing?" inquired the Lady T'ien, who happened to enter at that moment, "and where does the fan come from which you hold in your hand?"

Thus invited, Chwang related all that had passed at the tomb. As he proceeded with the tale, Lady T'ien's countenance fell, and when he had concluded she broke forth indignantly, inveighing against the young widow, who she vowed was a disgrace to her sex. So soon as she had exhausted her vituperations, Chwang quietly repeated the proverb, "Knowing men's faces is not like knowing their hearts."

Interpreting this use of the saying as implying some doubts as to the value of her protestations, Lady T'ien exclaimed:

"How dare you condemn all women as though they were all formed in the same mould with this shameless widow? I wonder you are not afraid of calling down a judgment on yourself for such an injustice to me, and others like me."

"What need is there of all this violence?" rejoined her husband. "Now, tell me, if I were to die, would you, possessed of youth and beauty, be content to remain a widow for five, or even three years?"

"A faithful minister does not serve two princes, and a virtuous woman never thinks of a second husband," sententiously replied the lady. "If fate were to decree that you should die, it would not be a question of three years or of five years, for never, so long as life lasted, would I dream of a second marriage."

"It is hard to say, it is hard to say," replied Chwang.

"DO YOU THINK," rejoined his wife, "that women are like men, destitute of virtue and devoid of justice? When one wife is dead you look out for another, you divorce this one and take that one; but we women are for one saddle to one horse. Why do you say these things to annoy me?"

And she seized the fan and tore it to shreds.

"Calm yourself," said Chwang; "I only hope, if occasion offers, you will act up to your protestations."

Not many days after this Chwang fell dangerously ill, and as the symptoms increased in severity, he thus addressed his wife:

"I feel that my end is approaching, and that it is time I should bid you farewell. How unfortunate that you destroyed that fan the other day! You would have found it useful for drying my tomb."

"Pray, my husband, do not at such a moment suggest suspicions of me. Have I not studied the *Book of Rites*, and have I not learned from it to follow one husband, and one only? If you doubt my sincerity, I will die in your presence to prove to you what I say."

"I desire no more," replied Chwang; and then he added faintly, "I die. My eyes grow dim."

With these words he sank back breathless.

Having assured herself that her husband was dead, the Lady T'ien broke out into loud lamentations, and embraced the corpse again and again. For days and nights she wept and fasted, and constantly dwelt in her thoughts on the virtues and wisdom of the deceased. As was customary, on the death of so learned a man as Chwang, the neighbors all came to offer their condolences and to volunteer their assistance. Just as the last of these had retired, there arrived at the door a young and elegant scholar, whose face was like a picture, and whose lips looked as though they had been smeared with vermilion. He was dressed in a violet silk robe, and wore a black cap, an embroidered girdle, and scarlet shoes. His servant announced him as a Prince of the Kingdom of Tsoo, and he himself added by way of explanation:

"Some years ago I communicated to Chwang my desire to become his disciple. In furtherance of this purpose I came hither, and now, to my inexpressible regret, I find on my arrival that my master is dead."

To evince his respectful sorrow, the Prince at once exchanged his colored clothing for mourning garments, and prostrating himself before the coffin, struck his forehead four times on the ground, and sobbed forth, "Oh, learned Chwang, I am indeed unfortunate in not having been permitted to receive your instructions face to face. But to show my regard and affection for your memory, I will here remain and mourn for you a hundred days."

With these words he prostrated himself again four times, while he watered the earth with his tears. When more composed, he begged to be allowed to pay his respects to Lady T'ien, who, however, thrice declined to see him, and only at last consented when it was pointed out to her that, according to the most recondite authorities, the wives of deceased instructors should not refuse to see their husband's disciples.

After then receiving the Prince's compliments with downcast eyes, the Lady T'ien ventured just to cast one glance at her guest, and was so struck by his beauty and the grace of his figure, that a sentiment of more than interest suffused her heart. She begged him to take up his abode in her house, and when dinner was prepared she blended her sighs with his. As a token of her esteem, so soon as the repast was ended, she brought him the copies of *The Classic of Nan-hwa*, and the *Sûtra of Reason and of Virtue*, which her husband had been in the habit of using, and presented them to the Prince. He, on his part, in fulfilment of his desire of mourning for his master, daily knelt and lamented by the side of the coffin, and thither also the Lady T'ien repaired to breathe her sighs. These constant meetings provoked short conversations, and the glances, which on these occasions were exchanged between them, gradually betook less of condolence and more of affection, as time went on. It was plain that already the Prince was half enamored, while the lady was deeply in love. Being desirous of learning some particulars about her engaging guest, she one evening summoned his servant to her apartment, and having plied him with wine, inquired from him whether his master was married.

"My master," replied the servant, "has never yet been married."

"What qualities does he look for in a wife?"

"My master says," replied the servant, who had taken quite as much wine as was good for him, "that if he could obtain a renowned beauty like yourself, madam, his heart's desire would be fulfilled."

"Did he really say so?" eagerly asked the lady.

"Is it likely that an old man like me would tell you a lie?" replied the servant.

"If it be so, will you then act as a go-between, and arrange a match between us?"

The servant undertook to negotiate with his master, and promised to bring word of the result at any hour at which he might have anything to communicate.

So soon as the man was gone, the Lady T'ien gave way to excited impatience. She went backwards and forwards to the chamber of death, that she might pass the door of the Prince's room, and even listened at his window, hoping to hear him discussing with his servant the proposed alliance. All, however, was still until she approached the coffin, when she heard an unmistakable sound of hard breathing. Shocked and terrified, she exclaimed, "Can it be possible that the dead has come to life again!"

A light, however, relieved her apprehensions by discovering the form of the Prince's servant lying in a drunken sleep on a couch by the corpse. At any other time such disrespect to the deceased would have drawn from her a torrent of angry rebukes, but on this occasion she thought it best to say nothing, and on the next morning she accosted the defaulter without any reference to his escapade of the night before. To her eager inquiries the servant answered that his master was willing but that there were three unpropitious circumstances which made him hesitate.

"What are they?" asked the lady.

"First," answered the man, "my master says that the presence of the coffin in the salon makes it difficult to conduct marriage festivities in accordance with usage; secondly, that the illustrious Chwang having so deeply loved his wife, and that affection having been so tenderly returned by her in recognition of his great qualities, he fears that a second husband would probably not be held entitled to a like share of affection; and thirdly, that not having brought his luggage, he has neither the money nor the clothes necessary to play the part of a bridegroom."

"These circumstances need form no obstacle to our marriage," replied the lady. "As to the first objection, I can easily have the coffin removed into a shed at the back of the house; then as to the second, though my husband was a great Taoist authority, he was not by any means a very moral man. After his first wife's death he married a second, whom he divorced, and just before his own decease, he flirted outrageously with a widow whom he found fanning her husband's grave on the hill yonder. Why, then, should your master, young, handsome, and a prince, doubt the quality of my affection? Then as to the third objection, your master need not trouble himself about the expenses connected with our marriage; I will provide them. At this moment I have twenty taels of silver in my room, and these I will readily give him to provide himself clothes withal. Go back, then, and tell the Prince what I say, and remind him that there is no time like the present, and that there could be no more felicitous evening for our marriage than that of today."

The servant returned to his master, and presently brought back word to the lady that the Prince was convinced by her arguments, and ready for the ceremony.

On receipt of this joyful news, Lady T'ien exchanged her mourning for wedding garments, painted her cheeks, reddened her lips, and ordered some villagers to carry Chwang's coffin into a hut at the back of the house, and to prepare for the wedding. She herself arranged the lights and candles in the hall, and when the time arrived stood ready to receive the Prince, who presently entered. Bright as a polished gem and a gold setting, the two stood beneath the nuptial torch, radiant with beauty and love. At the conclusion of the ceremony, with every demonstration of affection, the Prince led his bride by the hand into the nuptial chamber. Suddenly, as they were about to retire to rest, the Prince was seized with violent convulsions.

The Lady T'ien, frantic with grief, embraced him, rubbed his chest, and when these remedies failed to revive him, called in his old servant.

"Has your master ever had any fits like this before?" she hurriedly inquired.

"Often," replied the man, "and no medicine ever alleviates his sufferings; there is only one thing that does."

"Oh, what is that?" asked the lady.

"The brains of a man, boiled in wine," answered the servant. "In Tsoo, when he has these attacks, the king, his father, beheads a malefactor and takes his brain to form the decoction."

"Will the brains of a man who has died a natural death do?" asked the lady.

"Yes, if forty days have not elapsed since death."

"My former husband's would do then. He has been dead only twenty days. Nothing will be easier than to open the coffin and take them out."

"But would you be willing to do it?"

"The Prince and I are now husband and wife. A wife with her body serves her husband, and should I refuse to do this for him out of regard for a corpse, which is fast becoming dust?"

So saying, she told the servant to look after his master, and seizing a hatchet, went straight to the hut to which the corpse had been removed. Having arranged the light conveniently, she tucked up her sleeves, clenched her teeth, and with both hands brought down the hatchet on the coffin-lid. At the thirty-first stroke the plank yielded, and the head of the coffin was forced open. Panting with her exertions, she cast a glance on the corpse preparatory to her further grim office, when, to her inexpressible horror, Chwang sighed twice, opened his eyes, and sat up.

A Dream of Spring

By TS'ÊN-TS'AN

Translated by L. Cranmer-Byng

Last night within my chamber's gloom some vague light breath of Spring
Came wandering and whispering, and bade my soul take wing.
A hundred moonlit miles away the Chiang crept to sea;
O keeper of my heart, I came by Chiang's ford to thee.
It lingered but a moment's space, that dream of Spring, and died;
Yet as my head the pillows pressed, my soul had found thy side.
Oh! Chiang Nan's a hundred miles, yet in a moment's space
I've flown away to Chiang Nan and touched a dreaming face.

Ts'ên-Ts'an, Governor of Chia-chou and disciple of Tu Fu, whom his countrymen call the God of Verse, lived about 750 A.D., and himself had an important influence on Chinese poetry.

With a piercing shriek she shrank backwards, and dropped the hatchet from her palsied hands.

"My dear wife," said Chwang, "Help me to rise."

Afraid to do anything else but obey, she assisted him out of the coffin and offered him support, while he led the way, lamp in hand, to her chamber. Remembering the sight that would there meet his eyes, the wretched woman trembled as they approached the door. What was her relief, however, to find that the Prince and his servant had disappeared. Taking advantage of this circumstance, she assumed every woman's wile, and in softest accents said, "Ever since your death you have been in my thoughts day and night. Just now, hearing a noise in your coffin, and remembering how, in the tales of old, souls are said to return to their bodies, the hope occurred to me that it might be so in your case, and I took a hatchet to open your coffin. Thank Heaven and Earth, my felicity is complete; you are once more by my side."

"Many thanks, madam," said Chwang, "for your deep consideration. But may I ask why you are dressed in such gay clothing?"

"When I went to open your coffin, I had, as I say, a secret presentiment of my good fortune, and I dared not receive you back to life in mourning attire."

"Oh," replied her husband, "but there is one other circumstance which I should like to have explained. Why was my coffin tossed into a ruined barn?"

To this question Lady T'ien's woman's wit failed to supply an answer. Chwang looked at the cups and wine which formed the relics of the marriage feast, but made no other remark thereon, except to tell his wife to warm him some wine. This she did, employing all her most engaging wiles to win a smile from her husband; but he steadily rejected her advances, and presently, pointing with his finger over her shoulder, he said, "Look at those two men behind you."

She turned with an instinctive knowledge that she would see the Prince and his servant in the courtyard, and so she did. Horrified at the sight, she turned her eyes toward her husband, but he was not there. Again looking toward the courtyard she found that the Prince and his servant had now disappeared, and that Chwang was once more at her side. Perceiving then the true state of the case, that the Prince and his servant were but Chwang's other self, which he by his magical power was able to project into separate existences, she saw that all attempts at concealment were vain; and taking her girdle from her waist, she tied it to a beam and hanged herself on the spot.

So soon as life was extinct Chwang put his wife into the coffin from which he had lately emerged, and setting fire to his house, burned it with its contents to ashes.

As to Chwang, it is said that he set out as on a journey toward the West. His ultimate destination is not known, but one thing is certain, and that is, that he remained a widower for the rest of his life.

Valentine *to a* Man *of* Worth

By EDWARD A. CHURCH

Fair sir, to you my maiden intuitions,
Shy but sincere, ingenuously incline,
And if I find you answer the conditions
I'll take your bid and be your valentine.

I know your worth—that is, your general merit;
But, when your mourned and wealthy father died,
Pray tell a simple girl, did you inherit
His virtues only—or a bit beside?

Yes, I admire your lofty reputation,
Dear to my artless spirit as my own;
But tell me this—to still my trepidation—
Are you an owner in Bell Telephone?

Your learning too has bound my heart in fetters,
For you are wise, if Street report be true;
I too a childish fancy have for letters:
I hope you're solid on "C. B. & Q."

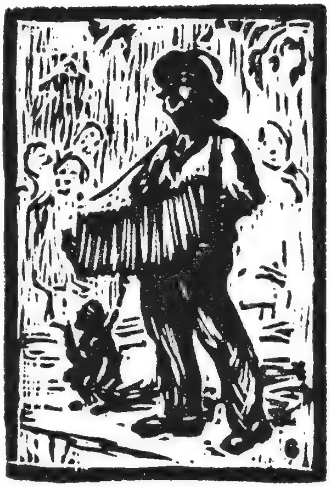
Your noble presence—"dignified and stately"—
With inexperienced ardor I adore;
But those Villard stocks! have you tried 'em lately?
And were you "long" or "short" on that Lake Shore?

So, gentle sir, if you aright but read me,
And will with all your bonds and stocks be mine,
Then into Mutual Union you shall lead me,
And I will be
Your booming
Valentine.

By LAURA SPENCER PORTOR

The Monkey with the Green Pea-Jacket

Woodcut by
Charles R. Gardner



Laura Spencer Portor

tells the story of an organ grinder's monkey who returns to the jungle

HE WAS BACK in the Jungle. Back again! Dear! dear! that adventurous spirit! that leaping star that had long vanished in the blue! and, lo and behold! the star had an orbit, and was returned to their gaze! There was a great bobbing of noses, blinking of eyes, a tightening of hands, on vine and branch!

They appeared to be hypnotized, fairly, while he told them of Tonio and Philippa and the hurdy-gurdy; of the wharves and the shipping; of the narrow streets with the tall houses in the downtown quarters, where Philippa and Tonio lived. Then at last he told how he had managed, when Tonio and Philippa were asleep on the wharf, to stow away in the hold of the right ship, the one that had brought the coconuts and the other things from home, and was about to leave (this he knew by the cursing of the sailors) on her return journey.

Ah, how they listened!

Every so often the very old brown chimpanzee, who was known throughout the Jungle as the "Lonely One" (because of his knowledge, no doubt), would venture to interrupt and ask what this or that might mean. "Automobiles," for instance; "wharves"; "hurdy-gurdys"? The Hunting Party had no such things as these. For the "Lonely One" dated everything from the Hunting Party, which had come within some miles of the Jungle, and which the "Lonely One" had gone cautiously to inspect, at a certain distance.

Then, too, there was the "Bold-faced One" who interrupted from time to time, he also to ask questions. He it was who was lord of the Jungle. He had great streaks of peacock blue and green on his nose, which none of the others had; and his hands were more like a man's, and his forearms short and powerful; and the soles of his feet were blue, also, and he had a way sometimes of lifting his head until the back of it rested between his shoulder-blades and then looking out from between the slits of his almost closed, heavy-lidded eyes. This gave him a wise look, beyond all words to describe—wise and at the same time wicked. If he were displeased with anyone, or if he wished to disperse a company, he had only to put his head back in that way and presently up and along the branches, down and through covert openings, the Jungle folk would go, or creep, or crawl, or slink, until in a few moments not a soul but himself remained. Then he would gather up the stone he always carried with him and make off through the trees, climbing with the aid of his powerful blue-soled feet and one strong hand, the other holding the stone secure.

These two, then, the "Lonely One" and the "Bold-faced One," put the questions. So, Alessandro (that was the name Tonio and Philippa had given him) got through the story at last—the story of his return, sketched in with high-lights of the marvel that his life had been over there.

It was growing late. The quick-moving night, soft-footed as a beast of the Jungle, was almost upon them. They retired up vine and branch, talking things over among themselves. The "Lonely One" before he left offered the hero a half a coconut. The "Bold-faced One" retreated slowly up the dim trunk of a rubber tree. As he mounted one could see the blue soles of his feet as they alternately grasped and released the trunk as though they might have been the strange animated footmarks of his shadowy, lurid progress. His right hand doubled against his side was still holding the stone.

But in all that Jungle company there was one who, though she listened intently to questions and answers, would never have cared to ask a question herself. It was not with Alessandro's knowledge, but with himself, she was concerned. He was a hero. He had been in strange places. Out and across the great expanse of water and back again! A traveler, an adventurous spirit! Someone, mind you, before whom the Jungle fell quiet, and to whom the "Lonely One" and the "Bold-faced One" gave attentive interest. While all the rest listened, giving her no thought, she had closed one little fist around a vine and gazed her fill at him. And once, glancing indifferently over the company (ah, that lordly, masterful indifference of his!) Alessandro's eye had caught hers; and her heart knocked suddenly like something suspended that an inadvertent hand has struck. Then his gaze passed on with large indifference, leaving her humbled and exalted and changed.

MOST OF THE OTHERS, tired from the excitement of the day, were asleep; but not Alessandro. He was too glad to be back in the Jungle moonlight to forego any of it.

He looked up and around with pleasure at the colossal vegetation, the giant trunks, the up-climbing massive monkey-ladders, the arching fronds of fern, and the grand groups of heavy-scented orchids; the great, long fingers of the air roots, too, reaching down, down, seventy feet or more, bent, it seemed, like a giant miser's fingers, on touching and grasping the rich soil. He remembered, in contrast, the absurdly diminutive vegetation in the Park in New York, with the tops of the trees as close over your head, almost, as the umbrellas which foolish people in cities carry over their head-dresses on rainy days.

Yes; he was glad to be back. His nostrils quivered in delighted recognition of the scents of the Jungle, too, for in the Jungle, ah, what odors! Voices of a kind, with which beast and flower and tree proclaimed themselves and saluted one another. There the jackal had passed, and there the jungle-bug, or there the giant armadillo; here the leaping paca, and there the red deer; and across and among these concords of speaking silences, or suspended above them and shedding varied sweetness like censers, marvelous blossoms here or there or high up in the roof of the Jungle, radiated or dropped perfume and proclaimed themselves penetratingly.

In the two dark, low rooms where Tonio and Philippa had lived there was a certain blend of odors of cheese and macaroni and olive-oil and stale chianti and garlic, but how slender they were and unimportant, without especial incident or meaning, with nothing changing or dramatic in them. You found them there, always in the same place; you came back to them day after day, with only now and then the odor of a banana added for variety. But here! Ah, he drew in a long breath. Here!

Nevertheless, he dwelt rather sentimentally on the thought of how Tonio and Philippa must be missing him, Tonio with the great excitement. For when Alessandro had sometimes found life almost unendurable because of homesickness, it was Tonio who would lift the little drooped head with one finger and say, with pity or alarm: "Ecco! Philippa! He pines! He pines for the Jungle!" and Philippa would give an extra jerk to the frying-pan and, without even turning her head, would say, "Well, then, he is a little fool!"

Ah, that once that they thought they had lost him —when he had gone to sleep in the clothes-closet! Heavens! what a screaming and blaming of each other! Then, when Philippa found him at last, she had given him such a shaking! Him, mind you! yes! and dragged him along by the hand the way you have seen angry mothers drag their children. And as he went with her unwillingly, he had blinked up at her to see if she really meant to offer him such indignity as that, and then, seeing no relenting in her tight-shut lips, he had looked back hopefully over his shoulder at Tonio. But Tonio's dark face gave no sign. Tonio, when he chose, had a voice like a bull; but even Tonio was not the man to cross Philippa at the moment she had her lips shut like that. So she continued to drag him along, his little, delicate hand in her great paw, and at such a rate that there were seconds when his hind legs actually did not altogether touch the floor. When at last she got him to his little, old, greasy wicker basket, Philippa clapped him down in it with perfectly unnecessary violence, gave him one hard slap (Good heavens!) jerked the cover over him, head and all, and left him to blink and boil and meditate and simmer and surmise on what would happen to him next.

As he was thinking of all this, he was roused by a touch upon his arm, tentative, delicate. He turned his head and saw beside him the kindly, anxious face of the one who, among all the rest, had gazed at him so devotedly and absorbedly that afternoon. Her eyes looked out at him now, incredibly ancient, though she was still so young.

"Now will you tell me more?" she begged. "The rest are all asleep."

"What would you have me tell you?" He affected a wide indifference, pretending not to understand.

"Everything! All about your glories! All about the wonderful things you did!"

"Oh, that!"

He waited as though to consider and select out of the entire magnificent mass something—not too overwhelming—something suited to her intellect.

"WELL," HE BEGAN, at last, "they took great pains to educate me to appear in public. New York is very different, of course, from the Jungle. There one must be educated."

The terms he used were altogether strange to her, yet she understood amazingly well, mainly, of course, with an understanding of the heart.

"Like a city upon a hill, at night," he told her, "lighted so high, so high! A million million stars! not spread out skimpily like that" (he lifted his chin, an indifferent jerk, to indicate the mere heavens). "Not at all like that, not way off, scattered and dim; but all gathered together in tiers and rows and brilliant groups and masses close together, I mean, as though you were to sweep your hand" (he swept his own, with a large gesture) "and gather all those stars up yonder into one corner of the heavens, and heap them up, in patterns or any way you liked. One sees it that way coming over the ferry at night, with the black waters underneath. We used sometimes to go over to Jersey."

He paused, remembering, and she stayed so still you might have thought her a part of the Jungle. .What were Jerseys and ferries? It mattered not. What if she did not understand? Was it not enough to be there in that vast place, with him, with the world asleep and a white moon over them? Was it not enough and to spare? With him who could gather the stars in the heavens and set them in rows and patterns!

The rapt attention she gave him was gratifying to him. He must not, however, allow her too easy a friendship—he who, mind you, that very afternoon had had a half a coconut given him by the "Lonely One," who in turn had seen the Hunting Party. Yet Alessandro meant very gladly to give her all the information she wanted, for he was not averse to having rumor and report of himself circulated.

He began by telling her of his and Tonio's and Philippa's journeys with the hurdy-gurdy, from the grand lower part of the city where every house had hundreds of people in it to the poor rich quarter where quite the contrary was true.

"We went there," he said, in a lordly manner, "to bring some pleasure to the children of that sad, oppressed community—Tonio and Philippa to grind the hurdy-gurdy, I to dance on its top."

She blinked at thought of all this—ah, the kingliness and bounty of him!—She hung upon his words.

"They had need enough of us!" he continued. "For there, mind you, you shall find no children free and yelling and dodging among the carts and trucks, and dragging delightful tin cans along to make a noise. On the contrary, the children there go about singly or in twos or threes, sedate and sad, under the charge of sometimes terrible-looking caretakers and keepers known as nurses and governesses, who tell them what they may or may not do, and sometimes (I have seen it myself) slap the hands of the littlest ones and speak to them in a language that is not their own. In that quarter the women do not throw their heads back, like my queenly Philippa, and laugh louder than the macaw; nor scream, when they choose, like the parrot, telling their next-door neighbors what they think of them. They are very subdued and sad, the poor women of the rich quarter. I have seen a great many of them, but I never yet saw one of them put her hands on her hips and fall into a dance to the music of the hurdy-gurdy; nor have I seen a single one of them beat the tamborine, quicker and quicker, madder and madder, her fists, her wrists, and the tips of her fingers. Spin! spin! whirl and jangle! then *bang* on her elbows, and whirl again on her fingers! No, never one of them; but you should see how Philippa can do it!

"Well, that is natural. They are weaklings, of course, for the most part; they have to be dragged everywhere in automobiles, like bundles, whereas Tonio and Philippa, now, went about anywhere, everywhere, from one end of the city to the other, on their own legs and dragging the hurdy-gurdy at that! Then, too, if you could see what the poor rich women are obliged to bear on their heads—burdens of brims and feathers and plumes and maybe even a parasol over all this—whereas Philippa wore nothing on her head and dared let the sun shine on her direct. Then, too, if you could see the poor, downtrodden things guarded by men and women in uniforms who lord it over them like jailers, who announce when they may come to dinner, and who put their food before them, often more than the poor things can eat, and keep bringing in more and more and carrying it away; who leave them no privacy; who stand about in the halls and passageways and shut them up in their automobiles or let them out when they choose. But Tonio and Philippa—ah, if you had ever seen Philippa you would know she was never summoned. She fried things in the frying-pan her very self. She put exactly what she liked on the table, herself—bread and cheese and a bottle of wine; and never a person to stand behind *her* chair and dole out food to her! Bread and cheese and a flagon of wine! And if Tonio was greedy, and took too much of anything, Philippa grabbed it like a queen!"

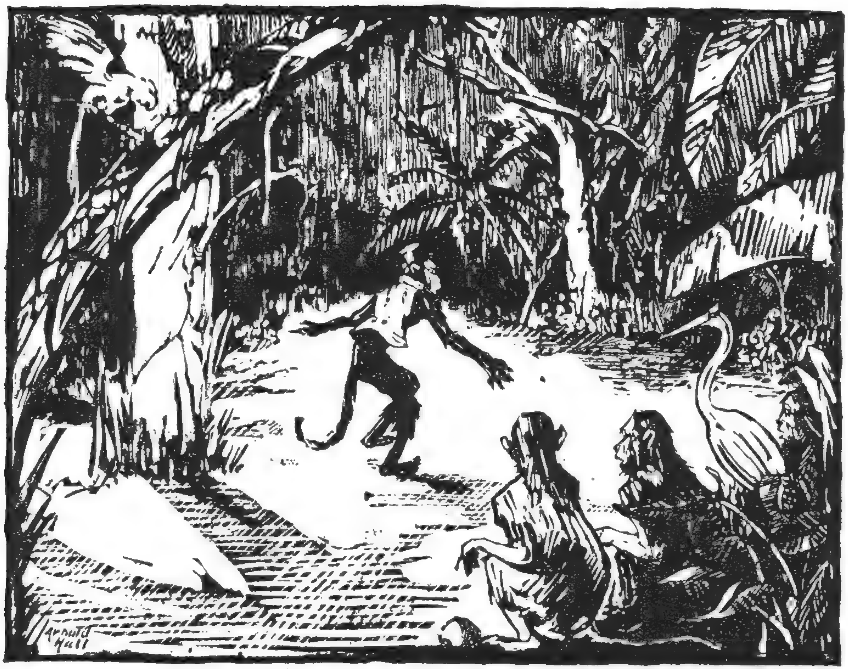
HIS COMPANION listened enraptured. All that he recited was astonishing, but not surprising to her. Was he not a hundred times worthy of all this? Meantime he was speaking again:

"One Sunday they went to see Philippa's terrible old sick aunt; a wicked old woman she was, who did as she pleased and defied the devil. She had a drooping eyelid that she had to hold propped up with one finger. Well, they left me with a young boy who lived near them. He took me inside his overcoat and on a train that flies through the air right past the second stories of the houses, and then he went over to the poor rich quarter and strolled about. At last he went into one of the churches and he allowed me to peek out a little.

"Ah, the sadness and the dreariness! There was music, but not like Tonio's, not like Tonio's! Nothing rollicking and good-natured like that, all rippling runs and clickety-clack, nor was there a particle of dancing in the aisle, only the groans of the poor rich people, begging for mercy and asking to be saved, while another of the jailers, high up in a box where he could keep an eye on every one of them, shook his fist at them. Whereas Tonio and Philippa! Ah, well, when they walked into a church it was like honored visitors on a holiday, and if they knelt it was quite happily and before an image that had little lights about it, very gay and attractive."

She closed her eyes, picturing it all—the glory and power of his associates, the splendor of his life. She could see the children with tin cans and freedom gathering around while Tonio ground out the music and Philippa beat upon the tamborine, and he, ah, he danced upon the top of the marvelous instrument.

Meantime, like an artist, he was not using all the color upon his palette, only selecting here and there, and mixing and combining, according to his purpose. He would, of course, leave untold, for instance, that about the butcher's boy with the basket who had given him the wicked pinch one day. He would say nothing, either, of how his heart used to beat with dread of the strange faces as he danced, and with fear of Tonio's rough, urging voice. He would not tell her of the dreadful day when, trembling with fear, he had dropped the tin cup and spilled the pennies, nor of the cruel jerk of the chain, nor how he had fled in a panic



Drawing by Arnold Hall

The entire crowd came, as by a powerful magnetism, a few inches closer.

back to Tonio's shoulder. Better Tonio cross, and a beating, than the wicked, deriding boys, making fun of his misfortune. No; these had no real part in the picture he was painting. Instead, he spoke of that which was in a sense its central point, toward which every other line and interest converged.

"And then there was the green pea-jacket."

She asked him about it, exactly as he knew she would, and he explained how he had come by it.

He did not tell her that he had had a jacket before this one, a poor old dingy red one which he had inherited from his predecessor, a former monkey of Tonio's who had died suddenly of cramps one night and the responsibility for whose death remained a rich and unfailing source of quarrel between Tonio and Philippa. He did not tell her how the red jacket had become, with long wear, so greasy and grimy that he hated it. All these things he eliminated. What he did tell her was that a "beautiful creature with gold hair and white hands"—so he designated her—had told Tonio that a monkey who danced so nobly should have a green pea-jacket, trimmed with gold, and that she herself would make it. It would be ready the next time they were pleased to come to that quarter. And they did go, of course. And the queenly creature, having made the jacket for him, now helped him into it and buttoned it at the neck for him with her milk-white hands, and then clasped those hands in very joy and admiration.

(Ah, how she listened!)

"Some day," he said, grandly, "I will dance for you in it. I shall dance for you in the green pea-jacket."

There was a hardly audible sound overhead. Alessandro's heart stopped as it used to when Tonio jerked the chain. The night was almost gone. Soon the vast dawn would come striding above the rim of the horizon, the great red sun in her hand, smiting it like a tocsin, calling the world to wake once more; and the light would quiver and thrill and stream from it like sound, and would change, as it quivered, into the passionate pulsations of bird-songs and the multitudinous reverberations of the morning. But that moment had not come, nor was the stirring overhead a thing of the dawn. They both glanced up. It was the "Bold-faced One" moving stealthily like a large shadow, and just making off through the trees.

She waited for nothing, but fled. Her heart was full of terror. As she went, a hundred questions hurried with her and a pack of fears ran step for step, soft-footed, beside her. What was the worst the "Bold-faced One" could do? She knew his jealous power, and the jealous guarding of that power! Lord of the Jungle he was. How long had he been there, watching them? A moment before and she had been a creature wrapt away from everything, alone with one who could gather the stars into one corner of the heavens with his hand and set them in rows and patterns, and now she was a little female monkey hastening through the Jungle, full of fear. Yet certainty went with her, too. Ah, he would dance for them! In the green pea-jacket!

THEY SAT about the clearing, waiting. She thought now in a bewildered way how foolish had been all her fears. The "Bold-faced One" was lord of the Jungle, to be sure, but that would only redound now to her love's fame when this mighty one also paid him homage.

She sat in the crotch of a pale-trunked rubber tree, clasping, to steady herself, the ropes of the liana, and watched the rest gather.

They began coming at dawn, with whirring wing or nimble feet, or deliberate, stealthy, padded paw. There were soon a deafening chatter and screaming in the upper air, the shrill parakeets making themselves heard highest of all and well above the chatter of the monkeys. From the animals below there were mutterings and an occasional growl. By and by the "Lonely One" came slowly, carrying a coconut. Everyone paid him the homage of silence as he passed by them. No one knew, or guessed, even, what he might know, he who had seen the Hunting Party.

Her glance ran from one group to another in feverish excitement. Presently, the "Bold-faced One" appeared, letting himself down solemnly from limb to limb, the lurid blue shoes of his hind feet showing now one, now the other, as he descended. He seated himself at last on the ground, the blue soles turned in, facing each other. The stone that he carried he placed carefully beside him. He raised his muzzle, with the peacock-blue and green stripes on it, and looked about, up and down, but not directly at anyone—indifferent and waiting.

At last, after what seemed hours of delay, the one she waited for was there! Lo and behold him!

He ran into the clearing on all-fours. He looked up and around at the whole vast audience about and above him.

Her heart stopped with pride. She wondered whether in all that mass of faces he had noted hers. Her heart was going hard again now, thimp-thump. She took her eyes from her hero only to take a quick glance at the rest, to see in what manner they observed him.

She need not have been anxious. Not one of them but observed him absorbedly. Even the "Bold-faced One," whom, as a rule, everybody watched, had his eyes now on Alessandro.

The chattering had ceased. There was not a sound. Silence in the Jungle is an impressive thing.

Alessandro turned about again on all-fours and glanced again at those on the branches above him. The old association of fear was strong in him and his heart shook. Yet what had he to fear? Here was no butcher's boy, here no Tonio with dark face, here no chain. He was his own master. They believed in his greatness. They had asked him to dance. Well and good. This was as it should be. Alessandro, with the world waiting for him, would dance, with even the Lord of the Jungle looking on.

She who watched him with so much understanding was at the first amazed that he did not wear the green pea-jacket, nor could she have imagined that fear deterred him.

Yet it was fear which had led him into the clearing without it. Let discretion be the better part of his dancing, at first. For now that the actual test was come, he had a dim realization that the pea-jacket stood as a symbol of something borrowed, assumed, affected; something out of the order of life and nature; something that set aside the underlying law of the Jungle; something which affronted truth and flaunted probability. For had not he and his kind from time immemorial, whereof the memory of the Jungle ran not to the contrary, worn dull-colored coats? Were not the blue soles and the blue and green streaks of the "Bold-faced One" mighty things of right and title fixed and inherited for ages, come by through no quick assumptions, rather by age-old prerogatives and lawful successions? Who had colored the great blue parrot's plumage, or lent its scarlet to the giant tree-toad? Who had vouchsafed its rich red color to the huge red squirrel, or his ill-fitting, long-tailed coat to the giant armadillo? The pale-green light to the phosphorescent beetle, or the red lantern to the Jungle night-fly? Who had bestowed upon the great kalawoe his wide night wings for flight, feathered with softness like velvet, and his cry that trembled and wailed and died like something falling, falling into a bottomless abyss? Who had from generation to generation bestowed upon the musk its pungent and powerful odor, and upon the orchid with the flesh-colored heart, high up, high up, the unfailing brilliancy of its cup and the unchanging falling incense of its perfume? Who shall remove or alter or change so much as a jot or a tittle any of all these things? Shall the paca, feasting on nuts, lift its head and say, "I am lord of these matters"? or the tree-shrew its muzzle from the bark and its ant-eating and declare, "I have power to change the ancient law"? Shall the night-hawk put on the daylight feathers of the peacock, or the monkey the plumage of the macaw? Where all is law and order, shall an assumption of miracle appear? Where knowledge and right have come by toil and travail, shall one rise and say, "Away from all this, and hear me for a prophet"?

He knew in a dim, adumbrated fashion that in a world of law there is shame in an assumption of miracle; he knew that a lie is something for which creation will not stand; he knew dimly that to trespass on truth is to pull heaven and earth about one's ears. All this he knew surely, but dimly, dimly. So he would not risk the pea-jacket. Instead he would dance—the steps that Tonio had taught him. They were real things that he had learned and knew.

He raised himself on his hind legs, man fashion, balanced himself, and took the first step. A little shiver of excitement ran through her as she watched him far up. The rest watched, watched.

Slowly, measuredly, he turned round and round.

She was conscious of some lack—the lack of music. Then her fancy supplied it. As he turned, every branch and rich-hung flower of the Jungle had for her a voice and sang for him to dance. She realized vaguely that to all the rest, the entire mass of spectators, there was no sound of music. They should have known of the hurdy-gurdy over yonder in that far province of his splendor of which he had told her. Ah, if they but knew, as she did, his power to command music and the stars of the heavens!

To Alessandro, as he turned in time and measure, imagination also supplied what was lacking. At each step the rain-like rippling clatter of the hurdy-gurdy was in his ears. To him and her it was not without this added glory that he danced. To the rest, he was one of their own, fashioned brown and small like a thousand others, turning about in a senseless sort of way. Fascinated they had been, hypnotized by expectancy. Surely this was not enough! What had they come out to see? What had they come far to witness? When would the real performance begin?

He turned about again and again. Once he had to resort to all-fours because he was so dizzy; then as Tonio had taught him, he raised himself on his hind legs, reversed and turned from left to right, round and round, with the world looking on.

He was getting dizzy again. He came down once more on all-fours, paused, and looked about him.

The Jungle waited. What would he do next? Well, he really had done all there was to do—his utmost. Turns to the left; turns to the right; there was nothing more.

The crowd waited. The "Lonely One" beat his coconut three times on the ground, then held it to his ear and listened, as though to find in it a strange answer to a mysterious question.

The "Bold-faced One" was not looking at anyone now, neither at the crowd of intent, blinking faces, nor at Alessandro; he was merely looking about him, an indifferent look.

She watched these two great ones with panic in her heart; then looked to Alessandro. What would come next?

Alessandro, too, felt it to be a crucial moment. He had failed to rouse their approval. They remained unstirred by his performance. His opportunity was at flood-tide. There was, he knew, not a moment to be lost. Soon the waters would be rushing black and fearful, sweeping him back toward failure and the common level and the derisive laughter of the crowd.

He signaled the "Bold-faced One." He ran over and conveyed some intelligence to him. The eyes of all were on these two. All the rest would take their cue from the Lord of the Jungle. The Lord of the Jungle, blinking slowly, signified he would wait. Then Alessandro hurried away they knew not where.

She knew what it was he had gone for. The green pea-jacket! Fear and pride and a conflict of emotions were in her. She could already see his power and his glory confounding these all about her. When he came back and danced for them in the green pea-jacket! Her excited imagination did not find it hard to believe the flowers and trees of the Jungle actually would find voice; and to the sound of them, and to the confoundment and amazement of his audience, he would dance, dance, dance until the soft-footed Jungle night came suddenly and looked over the heads of them all, to behold him. Then, then, she could see him gather the stars out of the heavens and heap them up in one corner in rows and patterns. It was not until she had thus given him every glory, that she thought of herself, and saw herself famous, too, distinguished forever by the attention he had paid her, and by the hours spent with him in the moonlight, that circumstance which the "Bold-faced One"—she was glad now—had witnessed.

A START OF INTEREST ran through the audience. He was among them again.

His lower limbs were bare, but the upper part of his body was clothed in the bright green pea-jacket. It was braided with gilt cord, and down its sides hung round gilt buttons. The thing was electrifying!

The entire crowd came as by a powerful magnetism a few inches closer. She herself dropped down, a vine or two lower and nearer. Even the "Bold-faced One" did not pretend indifference now. He had half risen. His eyes were fixed on Alessandro and his lips twitched and the peacock-colored streaks on his nose were in wrinkles. The great green-and-blue parrot, catching sight of the rival green of the pea-jacket, leaned so far forward, with his ruffed neck stretched so far out and his wings quivering, you would have sworn he was flying except that his talons still held tight to the branch. A huge red squirrel, with every hair standing suddenly on end and his two forefeet braced back and his claws stuck tensely in the trunk of a rubber tree, thrust his quivering nose forward with terrible curiosity.

Keyed up by their electric surprise, Alessandro rose and turned. It might have been he was dancing, it might have been he was simply showing them the jacket. Round and round slowly, slowly, so as to allow them to see and observe every side, every button, every bit of it! He turned, he turned, he turned!

She watched the "Bold-faced One." His neck stooped slowly, now, rather fearfully. She came nearer. His lips twitched. She drew a few feet closer. His lips quivered and drew back somewhat, showing his teeth. She paused in terror He dropped to all-fours, softly. She let herself down, down, arm by arm, dropping here and there toward the floor of the Jungle like the fruit of a tree which drops and strikes here and there, but without sound, as it goes.

THE "BOLD-FACED ONE" took a slow, cautious step, muzzle near the ground, like the sultry step of the storm, which, though it seems not to move, yet lowers and approaches. Then, high up, a single parakeet gave a sudden, terrible, shrill scream. At the sound of it, and as though they had been waiting only for that, the great green-and-blue parrot and the huge red squirrel let go their boughs. The "Bold-faced One" showed many teeth and snarled. Sooner than it takes to tell it, like sudden rush of wind and swift increasing downpour of rain among resonant palms and brittle bamboo, the noise and chatter and excitement swept and rose into screams and uproar. Through it all there was the quick dropping of dark forms like twigs loosened and thrown down by the storm's fury. That he had cared so much to please them might have flattered them and counted in his favor had they thought of it, but there was not time nor desire for philosophy. Feeling and emotion were everything, and had swept beyond control. Was it the too vivid green of the jacket? Was it the glitter and assumption of the gilt buttons? Was it, rather, the arrogance of the little turning figure, in which it was not given to those who watched to see any pathos? Or was it the ancient law rising with the old lash in its hand? Whatever it was, suddenly, like a cat-o'-nine tails flung wide, the fierceness, the envy, the jealousy, the ridicule, the hate, the resentment, the passion, the rage, the fury, of the Jungle were let loose.

The open space that had been the arena of his glory was now a fighting, excited mass. They were all trying to get at him; but, mad with excitement, they tumbled over one another and fought one another, instead, as they went. She was among them herself, threading, pushing her way. When she reached him he was defending himself madly. She caught at the loose jacket, pulled at it. He turned sharply, thinking to strike at her, too; and as he turned the garment came loose and remained in her hand.

After that, all was confusion again, and terror.

Never mind how she had managed to get him painfully to that particular opening in the Jungle, away and alone. He was sleeping now in the stillness of the night. She sat beside him, a patient little brown figure.

The rumor of another Hunting Party had mercifully taken the rest away. The "Lonely One" had knocked his coconut three times on the ground and had listened to it, and then, with a peculiar cry, had made off through the Jungle toward the direction in which the Hunting Party had once passed. And the rest had followed, followed, up limb and stem and along vine, stopping only to gather a few tamarinds or plums as they ran.

There was a waning moon, sunk now almost to the horizon; but all around was the steady light lent by the phosphorescent glimmer of fox-fire. The green-blue lucent glow of it gleamed and shone from giant stem and stalk like the lighting of one mystery by another. In its blended color it was like a silent brother to the great green parrot, but here was no quivering, uncertain jealousy, only a kindly steadiness, without trembling and fault of fickleness. From time to time the booming of the tree-frogs, like the bark of a lion, broke the silence, or the great kalawoe flung its wailing cry into the profound stillness, so that one could hear the trembling notes drop away and down, down, down, until the sound of it was lost in the soundless night.

She had her own thoughts to herself now. She had been timid all her life, but now, having once seen the world at its worst, fears occupied her no more. It is true, in every strange and chance sound now to which she lent her attention, she seemed to hear the growing murmur of jealous chatter, as one who has been shipwrecked hears still terribly in every chance shell to which he lends his ear the roar and rush of engulfing waters; but she had no thought of this now. Her little dim mind was occupied by questions that came and went. What, oh, what had stayed his mighty hand? Why had he not used his power? Was he not one to make kings and queens obey him? Was it not from his own lips that she had heard of his might? Does one question the word of such a one?

These uncertainties floated past like wrack of cloud in the moonlit skies; then one heavier than the rest loomed and darkened her understanding; it concerned the pea-jacket.

For some reason she had not been jealous of Philippa, the queen, nor of Tonio, the kingly. But the "beautiful creature" with gold hair and white hands who had fashioned the pea-jacket for him! Ah, how humble and bare her own life seemed, in comparison!

He stirred very slightly and waked. The moon was low now on the horizon. Flowing back into his consciousness, like a full tide, was all his knowledge, all his experience over yonder beneath the great, separating sea; his pitiful experience which he had interpreted to her as triumph. Yes; and now that it was past his reach, how he loved it! New York, the mighty, with her many streets and her terrifying noise; her squalor and her splendor and her foibles; her terrible tenements and her towering hostelries; her sunsets at the end of every cross-street, or in the morning a glorious dawn at the other end of every one of them, mind you! And the thronged ferries at night, carrying their great crowds with so strange a motion over dark, uncertain waters to a city of heaped-up stars; and the strings of lights, double strings of them, flung across high up, spanning the heavens, joining city to city, you cannot guess how; and the wet nights, oh, the marvelous wet nights that went about clad in fringes and beads of rain or floating mist, and decked with great red and blue and green rainflowers, and which carried in their dripping fingers shimmering ribbons of light, long and streaming and wavering and beautiful!

Dim and far that world he had despised and renounced and lost; yes, but real, all of it, and his own! He recalled it minutely—the faces of the children he had so much feared; the painful weight of his chain; Tonio's hateful, scolding voice, at sound of which he had so often fled; Philippa's dark brows and shining black hair; the overturned chianti-bottles; the reeking cheese; the blended odors of oil and macaroni; the remains of the midday meal left on the table, and Tonio snoring on the bed; the dishes unwashed; and the flies that would circle about maddeningly, and would light on his nose over and over again on exactly the same spot, for all he could do! A homesickness, an intolerable homesickness for all this splendor possessed him. Oh, to get back to it!

He opened his eyes and met hers intent on him. There was something indescribably comforting in this little brown face bent over him, all love and pity and adoring pride.

There were some soft murmurings on his part as his brain grew dizzy with pain and pleasure, and some fond repetitions.

"Some day," he said, faintly, "perhaps we could return there together. Tonio would be glad to see us."

She answered him nothing.

"And you could perhaps have a green pea-jacket, too. No doubt the beautiful creature would be willing to make you one. Where is it?"

She spread it over him with careful fingers. He closed his eyes, contented. Again dim and dizzy in his mind there floated the lights of a great city, and a wavering span of starlight glory, gathered together and flung across space.

So, while he drifted drowsily on a darkening sea of consciousness, her thoughts went wistfully to a dimly guessed land which was the home of a "beautiful creature"; nor could she know that this "beautiful creature" who had the power to fashion a pea-jacket was a little child of whom it was impossible she could have anything to fear, and who, at that moment, could she have known it, was, in that far land, learning painfully and under duress a little waltz of Schumann at the hands of a not too patient governess. So, while she continued to think of the white hands and the gold hair, he drew the pea-jacket close under his chin, and, longing for what he had once despised, turned his head weakly, his fluttering breath dying out softly, and was gone from her.

This did not dawn on her at once. When it did, she still thought nothing of herself, only of him. The

"Bold-faced One," with his cruel ways, was indeed Lord of the Jungle, and would return; but he would find this fine spirit had eluded him. She took a pride in it, as though it were a new glory. Nothing could touch him now. She did not know where he had gone, but there, she conceived, his might was returned to him. There music, like the Jungle singing, or like the rain of heaven speaking, was forever at his command, and stars as many as are in the firmament were heaped up to give him pleasure. There, too—he had said it himself—might she not one day find herself with him, with Tonio and Philippa, glad and ready to wait upon them.

So she began to take even a kind of sad pleasure in the new circumstance, and gave herself to wondering when she would be able to follow him.

She heard a slight noise overhead, at no great distance, and started. Her hand went out defensively, guardingly, to the green pea-jacket still covering him, that had been his glory. The "Bold-faced One" was coming toward her, like a dark shadow, the hand with the stone in it raised.

At the very same moment, far across the vast separating sea, Philippa, turning on her bed in the stifling heat and noise of that squalid quarter of which Alessandro had so much boasted, replied to Tonio's mournful reminder:

"Yes; but he was always a little fool—yet all the same I wish he were back."

Until the wet season came and rain rotted it, the pea-jacket drooped, suspended like a strange leaf, on the yanga-banga tree. The "Bold-faced One" himself had hung it there. It was guarded by turns by the great green parrot and the tree-shrew; and when the tree-shrew was one day killed by the jackal, and a new shrew was appointed, and, being a stranger and unfamiliar with these parts, wanted to know what in the name of breadfruit and coconuts this pea-jacket really was, of what was it made, how and for what purpose constructed—no one could give him any information further than that it had formerly been worn by a little brown monkey who had attempted to do some quite unheard-of things. Therein lay his fame. Then by and by it fell to pieces, and the great green parrot picked the gilt buttons off it and stowed them away in his crop—not to honor him who once wore them, but rather because he had a liking for bright, shining things, and, once safely stowed away like that, nobody could get them away from him.

Rules for a Gentleman

By JOHN HENRY CARDINAL NEWMAN

Hence it is that it is almost a definition of a gentleman to say he is one who never inflicts pain. This description is both refined and, as far as it goes, accurate. He is mainly occupied in merely removing the obstacles which hinder the free and unembarrassed action of those about him; and he concurs with their movements rather than takes the initiative himself. His benefits may be considered as parallel to what are called comforts or conveniences in arrangements of a personal nature; like an easy chair or a good fire, which do their part in dispelling cold and fatigue, though nature provides both means of rest and animal heat without them. The true gentleman in like manner carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast—all clashing of opinion, or collision of feeling, all restraint, or suspicion, or gloom, or resentment; his great concern being to make everyone at their ease and at home. He has his eyes on all his company; he is tender toward the bashful, gentle toward the distant, and merciful toward the absurd; he can recollect to whom he is speaking; he guards against unseasonable allusions, or topics which may irritate; he is seldom prominent in conversation, and never wearisome. He makes light of favors while he does them, and seems to be receiving when he is conferring. He never speaks of himself except when compelled, never defends himself by a mere retort, he has no ears for slander or gossip, is scrupulous in imputing motives to those who interfere with him, and interprets everything for the best. He is never mean or little in his disputes, never takes unfair advantage, never mistakes personalities or sharp sayings for arguments, or insinuates evil which he dare not say out. From a long-sighted prudence, he observes the maxim of the ancient sage, that we should ever conduct ourselves toward our enemy as if he were one day to be our friend. He has too much good sense to be affronted at insults, he is too well employed to remember injuries, and too indolent to bear malice. He is patient, forbearing, and resigned, on philosophical principles; he submits to pain, because it is inevitable; to bereavement, because it is irreparable, and to death, because it is his destiny. If he engages in controversy of any kind, his disciplined intellect preserves him from the blundering discourtesy of better, though less educated, minds; who, like blunt weapons, tear and hack instead of cutting clean, who mistake the point in argument, waste their strength on trifles, misconceive their adversary, and leave the question more involved than they find it. Right or wrong in his opinion, he is too clear-headed to be unjust; he is as simple as he is forcible, and as brief as he is decisive.

Lies

Woodcut by Lucina Smith Wakefield

A Comedy of the Eternal Feminine

By FERENC MOLNAR

Translated by Benjamin Glazer

LATE AFTERNOON *in February. A Budapest park. All day the sun has been shining warmly, but now it is setting, and a bleak wind is whistling through the leafless branches under which a boy and girl walk arm in arm. The boy is nineteen; the girl is fifteen. A pair of skates on a strap dangle from her disengaged arm. Near by a clock strikes once.*

THE GIRL—Good gracious, it's half past seven! (*She tries to withdraw her arm.*)

THE BOY—No, don't go yet.

THE GIRL—I must. Let me go. I'll get a scolding if I'm late for supper.

THE BOY—What time do you have supper?

THE GIRL—Let me go. At eight. And it's half past seven now.

THE BOY—Aren't you going to kiss me before you go?

THE GIRL (*very earnestly*)—I mustn't kiss you.

THE BOY—Then I'll kiss you.

THE GIRL—No. . . . Please!

THE BOY—Hasn't anyone ever kissed you before?

THE GIRL—No.

THE BOY—Then I shall be the first.

THE GIRL—No, no—you sha'n't—— (*But when his lips are on hers she does not resist.*)

THE BOY—Do you love me, Paula?

THE GIRL—Yes, I love you, Niklos. . . . I feel as if I could give my life for you, I love you so—Niklos. (*They kiss again, more ardently.*)

THE GIRL—Now let me go. I really must go.

THE BOY—I'll take you home.

THE GIRL—Not all the way. Only as far as Ferencz Square.

THE BOY—Just as you say, darling. (*They start for home.*)

THE GIRL (*as they walk*)—Do you love me, Niklos?

THE BOY—I told you I did.

THE GIRL—Say it again. I like to hear you say it. I wish you would never, never say anything else.

THE BOY—I love you; I love you; I love you; I love you. . . . (*He keeps on saying it until they reach Vorosmarty Street.*)

THE GIRL—Oh, we must hurry, hurry! I'm afraid I will get a scolding, it's so late.

THE BOY—No, you won't. God couldn't let you suffer on my account.

THE GIRL—Oh—God—I wonder He doesn't get angry with us. If I were in His place, and I saw that people thought of me only when they were in trouble, I'd say: "Now you want me, don't you?" And I'd turn my head away and walk out into the kitchen.

THE BOY (*gravely*)—God is just and merciful. If you have faith in Him, no harm can befall you. (*He is rather pleased with himself, having successfully uttered such a high-sounding sentiment.*)

THE GIRL (*impressed*)—You are so noble, Niklos.

THE BOY (*deprecatingly*)—Not at all. It's only that I have a good heart. I couldn't bear to have you suffer on my account, in case they should find out you were with me. Still, when you are my wife I'll make it up to you. You shall be the happiest woman on earth. I'll lay the stars at your feet—the—the— (*finds he has begun too high, finishes less ecstatically*) everything your heart desires—a car—a house—horses——

THE GIRL—And will you love me as much as you do now?

THE BOY—More, much more! I shall adore you then.

THE GIRL (*earnestly*)—Even if I deceive you?

THE BOY—What?

THE GIRL (*still more earnestly*)—What if I were untrue to you?

THE BOY (*quite simply*)—Then I should kill you. But you couldn't be untrue to me.

THE GIRL (*sincerely*)—No. I feel that I am honorable. (*With the light of love in her eyes*) I could never, never love anyone else but you, Niklos. (*They are silent, crossing the street.*)

THE BOY—What will you tell them at home?

THE GIRL—That depends.

The Boy—On what?

The Girl—On whether they have seen me. If they saw me near the music school I'll say I was there. If they saw me near the park I'll say I was skating.

The Boy—Where did you tell them you were going?

The Girl—Mother wasn't at home. I left word with the cook I was going to music school, but I took my skates along, too. When mother comes home cook will tell her I went to music school with my skates, and mother will say, "That wicked child will probably miss her music lesson again to go skating." But if I haven't been seen in the park I'll say I did take my music lesson, and that I brought my skates along only in case there was time left for skating afterwards, but there wasn't. Do you understand?

The Boy (*dubiously*)—Yes. But what are the skates for?

The Girl—My, but you're dense! Where have we been?

The Boy (*slowly*)—In the park.

The Girl—Well, then, if anyone saw us there I can say I had been skating, can't I? If mama finds out, the most she can scold me for is for missing my music lesson. Do you see? Isn't it better to be scolded for something trivial like that than have them suspect about you?

The Boy (*thoughtfully*)—Oh! I see. (*They are silent a while.*)

The Girl—What are you thinking about?

The Boy—How clever you are—how well you lie.

The Girl—Only to mother. I never yet told a lie to father. It's different with him.

The Boy—I'm sort of afraid of you. I'm wondering if you'll lie as cleverly when you are my wife. It would be easy for you to fool me—because—even now—I don't understand all that mix-up about the music lesson and the skating. I guess it would be easy to lie to me. I'm sort of slow and stupid where such things are concerned. But, anyway, I'm honest.

The Girl—Do you mean that I am not honest?

The Boy—Oh, no! You are the dearest and most straightforward girl in all the world. Only when I heard you lie so brilliantly it frightened me a bit.

The Girl—But I explained to you, it is only mother I'm fibbing to. And I'm only doing it for your sake.

The Boy (*disconsolately*)—Just the same I am afraid of you. You've made me look for hidden meanings behind every word you say. Oh, why did you do it? I know I sha'n't sleep a wink all night, thinking over all this. . . . Do you know what you've done? (*Tragically*) You have destroyed my faith in you.

The Girl (*sadly*)—You don't respect me.

The Boy—Yes, I do. But if only you had lied less brilliantly—or at least so that I could understand the intricacy of it all. Paula, I am sure I should never in my life be able to catch you in a lie.

The Girl (*a bit ashamed*)—Because I shall never lie to you. The truth is, I'm not really a good liar.

The Boy—Yes, you are, and I'm afraid of you. After we are married—— (*Suddenly*) Listen! I want to ask you something. Stop a minute.

The Girl—I can't. I'll get a scolding.

The Boy—No matter. Stop a minute. (*They stop.*) I want you to promise me—now—on the day of our first kiss, that you will never tell a lie again.

The Girl (*hesitates*)—But you must let me tell a lie just today—or else how shall I be able to explain where I was from six to eight?

The Boy—You can simply say that you were out walking in the park. And refuse to say any more even if they torture you with red-hot irons. (*The thought of having her tortured in such a manner gives him pause, yet he manfully swallows his scruples and repeats*) With red-hot irons. Then you won't have told a lie, and neither will you give yourself away. And if you get a whipping, bear it like a man. You'd suffer for my sake, wouldn't you?

The Girl (*adoringly*)—Yes, you dear, good, honest Niklos.

The Boy (*pleased, but frowns for honor's sake*)—Don't flatter me, but promise.

The Girl—I promise.

The Boy—Not even today?

The Girl—Not even today. (*They proceed in silence until Ferencz Square is reached.*)

The Boy (*pressing her hand ardently*)—Good-by, Paula darling. Same place tomorrow afternoon.

The Girl (*thoughtfully*)—Good-by. (*When she enters the house the family is already at supper.*)

* * *

The Mother—This is a nice time to come home.

The Father—Young lady, where have you been so late? (*As* Paula *does not answer at once, he stops eating and his expression is menacing. The maid slips unobtrusively out of the room. There is a pause.*)

The Mother (*rather helpfully now*)—Didn't you know what time it was?

The Father (*thundering*)—I asked you where you've been.

The Girl—At music school.

The Father (*with a male parent's contempt for music schools*)—And does that last until eight o'clock?

The Girl—No—but from there I went to the park to skate awhile, and before I knew it—— (*With increasing assurance she calmly elaborates the lie.*)

* * *

(The Boy *is awaiting her at the accustomed place the next afternoon.*)

The Boy—Well, what did you tell them at home last night? Did you lie?

The Girl (*for a moment conflicting impulses struggle within her. Then she looks him frankly in the eyes*)—Certainly not. I simply told them I'd been walking in the park. (*Under his trusting gaze she falters a bit, overcome by the realization that now she has deceived everyone—her father, her mother and* Niklos. *But quickly she decides that it couldn't have been avoided, and recovers her composure.*)

The Boy—Did they scold you?

The Girl—No.

The Boy (*blind and fatuous as any husband*)—You see! Lies aren't a bit necessary, are they? (*A doubt crosses his mind.*) You really did tell the truth?

The Girl (*convincing and self-possessed as any wife*)—Of course, dear. You don't suppose I'd lie to *you?*

Hors-d'oeuvres from the Newest Books

Aubrey Beardsley

DOWN IN THE CENTRAL AMERICAN JUNGLE

Here the Capuchin or white-faced monkey is a master of his environment. Not even a bird passes through the forest with greater freedom than this quadruped. He skips and dances along the limbs and, without pausing a second to measure the distance or select a take-off or a landing place, recklessly hurls himself through space and, with arms and legs widespread, crosses openings at least ten to twelve feet wide. Involuntarily I shout my applause; but with him it's all in a day's walk. He is doubtless unaware that he has done anything unusual. But his progress is not so heedless as it seems. He evidently takes note of things as he passes. One, hurrying through the tree-tops, stopped, went back a few yards over his route, and with some little effort broke off a decayed limb and threw it to the ground. Whether it had annoyed him or whether he considered it unsafe for future passage, I do not know. When traveling, the tail is rarely used as a prehensile organ, but is curled up inwardly. In this respect the Capuchin differs markedly from the Howler monkey. . . .

Capuchins eat insects, birds' eggs (doubtless also young birds), and fruit. As a rule, they are very wasteful, mutilating far more food than they eat. They test fruit still on the limb or pluck it, take a bite or two, and let it fall to reach for another. But a member of a band that passed my house late one evening had a large, round, green, nut-like object with which he evidently did not want to part. Stopping on a broad limb, he tried unsuccessfully to open it with his teeth, then took it in both hands and, with much force, brought it down on the limb; *thump, thump, thump, thump,* four times he pounded without result, then, with the nut grasped in one hand, he followed his companions. Three more times, at increasing distances, I heard the four thumps as, undiscouraged, he continued his efforts to crack his prize.

My Tropical Air Castle. FRANK M. CHAPMAN.

A ROBOT AS A PROXY WOOER

So these are the two beings that are going to replace us individually in the world, to do our work and leave us to our play. The timid human race will shrink behind its metal substitute. And even such a thing as a proposal of marriage, arduous, nerve-racking, and disturbing—will be gladly handed over to the deputy. With which, let us continue the story. . . .

The Tin Woman moved sideways eighteen degrees as guided by the reflected rays from the Iron Man's concave eye-pieces, with her base on a sofa. There was a pause. Both waited until the situation grew warm enough to raise their temperatures to the speaking point.

"I have come—" began the Iron Man in a low voice. Then there was a click in his throat and he paused. He was not yet warmed up. . . .

"Yes—" she murmured. Her phonograph seemed to revolve, but almost without sound.

"I want you to marry me," he said. He had to say it. These were the last of the words that had been put into him. He had no more.

The mistress of the Tin Woman, whom she here represented, had had her adjusted so that as soon as the word "marry" hit her, it would set her going.

". . . Oh, John—" she gasped. . . . The Iron Man . . . spoke no word. He couldn't. He had used up all his perforated strip of words. . . . The proposal was over.

* * *

And a few minutes later the Man—the real Man, if he can be called so, was telephoning to the Real Woman.

"Darling, I am so pleased. My Iron Man has just come home and as soon as I opened him I knew your answer. . . . Let's have John and Lizzie go through the Church-Service part of it right away. . . ."

And a week later, Iron John and Tin Lizzie were married by a Brass Clergyman and a Cast-Iron Sexton, while a Metal Choir sang their cylinders loose with joy.

The Iron Man and the Tin Woman.
STEPHEN LEACOCK.

THE TRAGEDY OF ADVENTURE

The adventurer is within us, and he contests for our favor with the social man we are obliged to be. These two sorts of life are incompatible; one we hanker after, the other we are obliged to. There is no other conflict so deep and bitter as this, whatever the pious say, for it derives from the very constitutions of human life, which so painfully separate us from all other beings. We, like the eagles, are born to be free. Yet we are obliged, in order to live at all, to make a cage of laws for ourselves and to stand on the perch. We are born as wasteful and unremorseful as tigers; we are obliged to be thrifty, or starve, or freeze. We are born to wander, and we are cursed to stay and dig.

And so the adventurous life is our first choice. Any baby that can walk is a splendid and typical adventurer; if they had the power as they have the will, what exploits and crimes would they not commit! We are born adventurers, and the love of adventures never leaves us till we are very old; old, timid men, in whose interest it is that adventure should quite die out. This is why all the poets are on one side and all the laws on the other; for laws are made by, and usually for, old men.

Twelve Against the Gods. WILLIAM BOLITHO.

NINON DE L'ENCLOS WRITES TO THE MARQUIS DE SÉVIGNÉ

. . . Love! I feel thy divine fury; my trouble, my transports, everything announces thy presence. Today a new sun rises for me; everything lives, everything is animated, everything seems to speak to me of my passion, everything invites me to cherish it. The fire consuming me gives to my heart, to all the faculties of my soul, a resilience, an activity which is diffused through all my affections. Since I loved you, my friends are dearer to me; I love myself more; the sounds of my theorbo and of my lute seem to me more moving, my voice more harmonious. If I want to perform a piece, passion and enthusiasm seize me; the disturbance they cause interrupt me every minute. Then a profound revery, full of delight, succeeds my transports. You are present to my eyes; I see you, I speak to you, I tell you that I love you; and it always seems you say it more tenderly than when you are indeed present. So favorable to you is my imagination and so contrary to you. I congratulate myself and I repent; I wish for you, and wish to fly from you; I write to you and tear up my letters; I re-read yours, they seem to me now gallant, now tender, rarely passionate and always too short. I consult my mirrors, I question my women about my charms. In brief, I love you; I am mad; and I do not know what I shall become, if you do not keep your word with me this evening.

Letters of Women in Love. R. L. MEGROZ.

THE ETERNAL "WHY?"

Perhaps Nigel had formally renounced peace on that day he plunged his hands into the pitchy mess of money-making. He had known peace before then—soft dreams that flew to him from the lattices of dawn. He remembered days when he had lain in the corner of some field, among the rustling hay-grass, his soul lost in the eternities of peace within it. But now—he had renounced peace. He had turned from pure things to defiled—and he had sharpened his brain, whetted it on artificialities. For the man with brains there is seldom peace, but an eternal question. The man without brains suffers only the problem of "what?"—it is the man with brains who has to face the seven-times hotter problem of "why?"

Why was a man, alone of all creatures, allowed to be at war with his environment—a prey to changes that were independent of, and unable to reproduce themselves in, the world around him? Why was a man the meeting-place of god and brute, the battle-ground of the two with their unending wars?—and so made that if one should triumph and drive out the other, the vanquished, whether god or brute, took away part of his manhood with him, and peace was won only at the price of incompleteness? . . . Why was consummation only a prelude to destruction?—the lusterless horns of the daylight moon seemed to be telling him that it waxed full only to wane. Why was a man given desires that were gratified only at their own expense? Why did his young blood call—call into the fire and dark—with only the fire and dark to answer it?

It was in this turmoil of "whys" that Nigel's longing for the woods became desperate. . . . He would go to the woods, he would find rest in their silent thickness.

Three Against the World. SHEILA KAYE-SMITH.

HUNTING DOGS

No other animal, not horse nor bull,
Could be more noble or more beautiful
Than these, who are more courteous than people,
Whose heads are higher and whose bodies ripple
More silkily than any of their kind.
No other dogs so tensely take the wind
As these, who stretch their long necks on the air
As if on water; so weedily the hair
Fringes each tail, floats from each delicate limb,
So hard they stare and breathe, they seem to swim.
And, swiftness softened, muscles at their ease,
When one of them with gentle hope to please
Trots quaintly up, and with a humorous face,
Drops in my hands the velvet of his face,
The petals of his ears and tongue, I lack
All hateful thoughts. Surely the howling pack
Is not of these, surely no terrible trouble
Was ever sought for wild things in the stubble
By eyes so tender, never through such soft breath
Flashed, like man's steel, the savage teeth of death.

This Delicate Love. WINIFRED WELLES.

[THE GOLDEN BOOK *Editorial Department, as a service to readers, will be glad to furnish information as to publisher, price, etc., of any volume mentioned here.*]

The Queen's Messenger tells his story— further complications in this strange mystery tale

By RICHARD HARDING DAVIS

In the Fog

The Story So Far:

FOUR MEMBERS of the exclusive Grill Club in London are seated at supper on the day following one of the worst fogs the English capital has ever known. One of the four men—an honorary member of the Club—is an American, who introduces himself as Lieutenant Ripley Sears, U. S. N., Naval Attaché to the Court of Russia. The attention of the four diners, and their conversation, are gradually focused upon a fifth Club member who sits apart, Sir Andrew ——, an influential member of Parliament, who is scheduled to speak in the House that evening in favor of a huge naval appropriation. Sir Andrew is about to depart when the American begins to recount an extraordinary adventure which has befallen him the previous evening; and the distinguished Parliamentarian, who has a passion for mystery and detective stories, joins the group of four at their table.

According to the story Lieutenant Sears tells, he has become hopelessly lost in the fog the night before. After groping about for a long time, his eye catches a square of light which indicates the open doorway of a private house set well back from the street. As he feels his way along the path to the light, a young man in evening clothes rushes past him; and arrived at the house, Sears comes upon a mysterious situation. The place is quiet and apparently deserted, but in the hallway sits a servant dressed in Russian livery, and fast asleep. Sears rouses him, and is able to make out that the lady of the house—whom the Russian speaks of as "Princess"—has been expecting a visitor. The servant believes Sears to be that visitor, and goes upstairs to announce the Excellency's arrival. Happening to glance about one of the rooms leading off from the hallway, the American sees a hand projecting limply from behind a richly carved screen, and upon investigation finds the body of a young man in evening clothes lying on a divan. He has been stabbed to death. And in the same room, stretched out beside a table, is the body of a beautiful young Russian woman who has met her end in the same violent manner. The servant returns, and, utterly bewildered, reports that he is unable to locate his mistress. Sears questions him, and learns that two young Englishmen have called on the Princess that evening. The Russian is unable to recall their names, but produces the visitors' calling cards.

PART TWO

THE AMERICAN paused abruptly and glanced at the faces about him. "I read the names," he repeated. He spoke with great reluctance.

"Continue!" cried the Baronet, sharply.

"I read the names," said the American with evident distaste, "and the family name of each was the same. They were the names of two brothers. One is well known to you. It is that of the African explorer of whom this gentleman was just speaking. I mean the Earl of Chetney. The other was the name of his brother, Lord Arthur Chetney."

The men at the table fell back as though a trapdoor had fallen open at their feet.

"Lord Chetney?" they exclaimed in chorus. They glanced at each other and back to the American, with every expression of concern and disbelief.

"It is impossible!" cried the Baronet. "Why, my dear sir, young Chetney arrived from Africa only yesterday. It was so stated in the evening papers."

The jaw of the American set in a resolute square, and he pressed his lips together.

"You are perfectly right, sir," he said. "Lord Chetney did arrive in London yesterday morning, and yesterday night I found his dead body."

The youngest member present was the first to recover. He seemed much less concerned over the identity of the murdered man than at the interruption of the narrative.

"Oh, please let him go on!" he cried. "What happened then? You say you found two visiting-cards. How do you know which card was that of the murdered man?"

The American, before he answered, waited until the chorus of exclamations had ceased. Then he continued as though he had not been interrupted.

"The instant I read the names upon the cards," he said, "I ran to the screen and, kneeling beside the dead man, began a search through his pockets. My hand at once fell upon a card-case, and I found on all the cards it contained the title of the Earl of Chetney. His watch and cigarette-case also bore his name. These evidences, and the fact of his bronzed skin, and that his cheek-bones were worn with fever, convinced me that the dead man was the African explorer, and the boy who had fled past me in the night was Arthur, his younger brother.

"I was so intent upon my search that I had forgotten the servant, and I was still on my knees when I heard a cry behind me. I turned, and saw the man gazing down at the body in abject horror.

"Before I could rise, he gave another cry of terror, and, flinging himself into the hall, raced toward the door to the street. I leaped after him, shouting to him to halt, but before I could reach the hall he had torn open the door, and I saw him spring out into the yellow fog. I cleared the steps in a jump and ran down the garden-walk just as the gate clicked in front of me. I I had it open on the instant, and, following the sound of the man's footsteps, I raced after him across the open street. He, also, could hear me, and he instantly stopped running, and there was absolute silence. He was so near that I almost fancied I could hear him panting, and I held my own breath to listen. But I could distinguish nothing but the dripping of the mist about us, and from far off the music of the Hungarian band, which I had heard when I first lost myself.

"All I could see was the square of light from the door I had left open behind me, and a lamp in the hall beyond it flickering in the draught. But even as I watched it, the flame of the lamp was blown violently to and fro, and the door, caught in the same current of air, closed slowly. I knew if it shut I could not again enter the house, and I rushed madly toward it. I believe I even shouted out, as though it were something human which I could compel to obey me, and then I caught my foot against the curb and smashed into the sidewalk. When I rose to my feet I was dizzy and half stunned, and though I thought then that I was moving toward the door, I know now that I probably turned directly from it: for, as I groped about, my fingers touched only the dripping fog, and the iron railings for which I sought seemed to have melted away. For many minutes I beat the mist with my arms like one at blind man's buff, turning sharply in circles, cursing aloud at my stupidity, and crying continually for help. At last a voice answered me from the fog, and I found myself held in the circle of a policeman's lantern.

"That is the end of my adventure. What I have to tell you now is what I learned from the police.

"AT THE STATION-HOUSE to which the man guided me I related what you have just heard. I told them that the house they must at once find was one set back from the street within a radius of two hundred yards from the Knightsbridge Barracks, that within fifty yards of it someone was giving a dance to the music of a Hungarian band, and that the railings before it were as high as a man's waist and filed to a point. With that to work upon, twenty men were at once ordered into the fog to search for the house, and Inspector Lyle himself was dispatched to the home of Lord Edam, Chetney's father, with a warrant for Lord Arthur's arrest. I was thanked and dismissed on my own recognizance.

"This morning Inspector Lyle called on me, and from him I learned the police theory of the scene I have just described.

"Apparently I had wandered very far in the fog, for up to noon today the house had not been found, nor had they been able to arrest Lord Arthur. He did not return to his father's house last night, and there is no trace of him; but from what the police knew of the past lives of the people I found in that lost house, they have evolved a theory, and their theory is that the murders were committed by Lord Arthur.

"The infatuation of his elder brother, Lord Chetney, for a Russian princess, so Inspector Lyle tells me, is well known to everyone. About two years ago the Princess Zichy (as she calls herself) and he were constantly together, and Chetney informed his friends that they were about to be married. The woman was notorious in two continents, and when Lord Edam heard of his son's infatuation he appealed to the police for her record.

"It is through his having applied to them that they know so much concerning her and her relations with the Chetneys. From the police Lord Edam learned that Madame Zichy had once been a spy in the employ of the Russian Third Section, but that lately she had been repudiated by her own government and was living by her wits, by blackmail, and by her beauty. Lord Edam laid this record before his son, but Chetney either knew it already or the woman persuaded him not to believe it, and the father and son parted in great anger. Two days later the marquis altered his will, leaving all of his money to the younger brother, Arthur.

"The title and some of the landed property he could not keep from Chetney, but he swore if his son saw the woman again that the will should stand as it was, and he would be left without a penny.

"This was about eighteen months ago, when, apparently, Chetney tired of the princess, and suddenly went off to shoot and explore in Central Africa. No word came from him, except that twice he was reported as having died of fever in the jungle, and finally two traders reached the coast who said they had seen his body. This was accepted by all as conclusive, and young Arthur was recognized as the heir to the Edam millions. On the strength of this supposition he at once began to borrow enormous sums from the money-lenders. This is of great importance, as the police believe it was these debts which drove him to the murder of his brother. Yesterday, as you know, Lord Chetney suddenly returned from the grave, and it was the fact that for two years he had been considered as dead which lent such importance to his return and which gave rise to those columns of detail concerning him which appeared in all the afternoon papers. But, obviously, during his absence he had not tired of the Princess Zichy, for we know that a few hours after he reached London he sought her out. His brother, who had also learned of his reappearance through the papers, probably suspected which would be the house he would first visit, and followed him there, arriving, so the Russian servant tells us, while the two were at coffee in the drawing-room. The princess, then, we also learn from the servant, withdrew to the dining-room, leaving the brothers together. What happened one can only guess.

"Lord Arthur knew now that when it was discovered he was no longer the heir, the money-lenders would come down upon him. The police believe that he at once sought out his brother to beg for money to cover the post-obits, but that, considering the sum he needed was several hundreds of thousands of pounds, Chetney refused to give it him. No one knew that Arthur had gone to seek out his brother. They were alone. It is possible, then, that in a passion of dis-

From an etching by Fred A. Farrell. Courtesy Schwartz Galleries

Dawn at Westminster

appointment, and crazed with the disgrace which he saw before him, young Arthur made himself the heir beyond further question. The death of his brother would have availed nothing if the woman remained alive. It is then possible that he crossed the hall, and, with the same weapon which made him Lord Edam's heir, destroyed the solitary witness to the murder. The only other person who could have seen it was sleeping in a drunken stupor, to which fact undoubtedly he owed his life. And yet," concluded the Naval Attaché, leaning forward and marking each word with his finger, "Lord Arthur blundered fatally. In his haste he left the door of the house open, so giving access to the first passer-by, and he forgot that when he entered it he had handed his card to the servant. That piece of paper may yet send him to the gallows. In the meantime, he has disappeared completely, and somewhere, in one of the millions of streets of this great capital, in a locked and empty house, lies the body of his brother and of the woman his brother loved, undiscovered, unburied, and with their murder unavenged."

In the discussion which followed the conclusion of the story of the Naval Attaché, the gentleman with the pearl took no part. Instead, he arose, and, beckoning a servant to a far corner of the room, whispered earnestly to him until a sudden movement on the part of Sir Andrew caused him to return hurriedly to the table.

"There are several points in Mr. Sears's story I want explained," he cried. "Be seated, Sir Andrew," he begged. "Let us have the opinion of an expert. I do not care what the police think, I want to know what you think."

But Sir Andrew rose reluctantly from his chair.

"I should like nothing better than to discuss this," he said. "But it is most important that I proceed to the House. I should have been there some time ago." He turned toward the servant and directed him to call a hansom.

The gentleman with the pearl stud looked appealingly at the Naval Attaché. "There are surely many details that you have not told us," he urged. "Some you have forgotten."

The Baronet interrupted quickly.

"I trust not," he said, "for I could not possibly stop to hear them."

"The story is finished," declared the Naval Attaché. "Until Lord Arthur is arrested or the bodies are found, there is nothing more to tell of either Chetney or the Princess Zichy."

"Of Lord Chetney, perhaps not," interrupted the sporting-looking gentleman with the black tie, "but there'll always be something to tell of the Princess Zichy. I know enough stories about her to fill a book. She was a most remarkable woman." The speaker dropped the end of his cigar into his coffee-cup and, taking his case from his pocket, selected a fresh one. As he did so he laughed and held up the case that the others might see it. It was an ordinary cigar-case of well-worn pig-skin, with a silver clasp.

"The only time I ever met her," he said, "she tried to rob me of this."

The Baronet regarded him closely.

"She tried to rob you?" he repeated.

"Tried to rob me of this," continued the gentleman in the black tie, "and of the Czarina's diamonds." His tone was one of mingled admiration and injury.

"The Czarina's diamonds!" exclaimed the Baronet. He glanced quickly and suspiciously at the speaker and then at the others. But their faces gave evidence of no other emotion than that of ordinary interest.

"Yes, the Czarina's diamonds," repeated the man with the black tie. "It was a necklace of diamonds. I was told to take them to the Russian Ambassador in Paris, who was to deliver them at Moscow. I am a Queen's Messenger," he added.

"Oh, I see," exclaimed Sir Andrew, in a tone of relief. "And you say that this same Princess Zichy, one of the victims of this double murder, endeavored to rob you of—of—that cigar-case."

"And the Czarina's diamonds," answered the Queen's Messenger imperturbably. "It's not much of a story, but it gives you an idea of the woman's character. The robbery took place between Paris and Marseilles."

The Baronet interrupted him with an abrupt movement. "No, no," he cried, shaking his head in protest. "Do not tempt me. I really cannot listen. I must be at the House in ten minutes."

"I am sorry," said the Queen's Messenger. He turned to those seated about him. "I wonder if the other gentlemen—" he inquired tentatively. There was a chorus of polite murmurs, and the Queen's Messenger, bowing his head in acknowledgment, took a preparatory sip from his glass. At the same moment the servant to whom the man with the black pearl had spoken slipped a piece of paper into his hand. He glanced at it, frowned, and threw it under the table.

The servant bowed to the Baronet.

"Your hansom is waiting, Sir Andrew," he said.

"The necklace was worth twenty thousand pounds," began the Queen's Messenger. "It was a present from the Queen of England to celebrate—" The Baronet gave an exclamation of angry annoyance.

"Upon my word, this is most provoking," he interrupted. "I really ought not to stay. But I certainly mean to hear this." He turned irritably to the servant. "Tell the hansom to wait," he commanded, and, with an air of a boy who is playing truant, slipped guiltily into his chair.

The gentleman with the black pearl smiled blandly and rapped upon the table.

"Order, gentlemen," he said. "Order for the story of the Queen's Messenger and the Czarina's diamonds."

II

"THE NECKLACE was a present from the Queen of England to the Czarina of Russia," began the Queen's Messenger. "It was to celebrate the occasion of the Czar's coronation. Our Foreign Office knew that the Russian Ambassador in Paris was to proceed to Moscow for that ceremony, and I was directed to go to Paris and turn over the necklace to him. But when I reached Paris I found he had not expected me until a week later, and was taking a few days' vacation at Nice. His people asked me to leave the necklace with them at the Embassy, but I had been charged to get a receipt for it from the Ambassador himself, so I started at once for Nice. The fact that Monte Carlo is not two thousand miles from Nice may have had something to do with making me carry out my instructions so carefully.

"Now, how the Princess Zichy came to find out about the necklace I don't know, but I can guess. As you have just heard, she was at one time a spy in the service of the Russian Government. And after they dismissed her she kept up her acquaintance with many of the Russian agents in London. It is probable that through one of them she learned that the necklace was to be sent to Moscow, and which one of the Queen's Messengers had been detailed to take it there. Still, I doubt if even that knowledge would have helped her if she had not also known something which I supposed no one else in the world knew but myself and one other man. And, curiously enough, the other man was a Queen's Messenger, too, and a friend of mine. You must know that up to the time of this robbery I had always concealed my despatches in a manner peculiarly my own. I got the idea from that play called 'A Scrap of Paper.' In it a man wants to hide a certain compromising document. He knows that all his rooms will be secretly searched for it, so he puts it in a torn envelop and sticks it up where anyone can see it on his mantle-shelf. The result is that the woman who is ransacking the house to find it looks in all the unlikely places, but passes over the scrap of paper that is just under her nose. Sometimes the papers and packages they give us to carry about Europe are of very great value, and sometimes they are special makes of cigarettes and orders to court-dressmakers. Sometimes we know what we are carrying and sometimes we do not. If it is a large sum of money or a treaty, they generally tell us. But, as a rule, we have no knowledge of what the package contains; so, to be on the safe side, we naturally take just as great care of it as though we knew it held the terms of an ultimatum or the crown-jewels. As a rule, my *confrères* carry the official packages in a despatch-box, which is just as obvious as a lady's jewel-bag in the hands of her maid. Everyone knows they are carrying something of value. They put a premium on dishonesty. Well, after I saw the 'Scrap-of-Paper' play, I determined to put the government valuables in the most unlikely place that anyone would look for them. So I used to hide the documents they gave me inside my riding-boots, and small articles, such as money or jewels, I carried in an old cigar-case. After I took to using my case for that purpose, I bought a new one, exactly like it, for my cigars. But, to avoid mistakes, I had my initials placed on both sides of the new one, and the moment I touched the case I could tell which it was by the raised initials.

"No one knew of this except the Queen's Messenger of whom I spoke. We once left Paris together on the Orient Express. I was going to Constantinople and he was to stop off at Vienna. On the journey I told him of my peculiar way of hiding things and showed him my cigar-case. If I recollect rightly, on that trip it held the Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George, which the Queen was sending to our Ambassador. The messenger was very much entertained at my scheme, and some months later when he met the Princess he told her about it as amusing story. Of course, he had no idea she was a Russian spy. He didn't know anything at all about her, except that she was a very attractive woman. It was indiscreet, but he could not possibly have guessed that she could ever make any use of what he told her.

"Later, after the robbery, I remembered that I had informed this young chap of my secret hiding-place, and when I saw him again I questioned him about it. He was greatly distressed, and said he had never seen the importance of the secret. He remembered he had told several people of it, and among others the Princess Zichy. In that way I found out that it was she who had robbed me, and I know that from the moment I left London she was following me, and that she knew then that the diamonds were concealed in my cigar-case.

"My train for Nice left Paris at ten in the morning. When I travel at night I generally tell the *chef de gare* that I am a Queen's Messenger, and he gives me a compartment to myself, but in the daytime I take whatever offers. On this morning I had found an empty compartment, and I had tipped the guard to keep everyone else out, not from any fear of losing the diamonds, but because I wanted to smoke. He had locked the door, and as the last bell had rung I supposed I was to travel alone, so I began to arrange my traps and make myself comfortable. The diamonds in the cigar-case were in the inside pocket of my waistcoat, and as they made a bulky package, I took them out, intending to put them in my hand-bag. It is a small satchel like a bookmaker's, or those hand-bags that couriers carry. I wear it slung from a strap across my shoulders, and, no matter whether I am sitting or walking, it never leaves me.

"I took the cigar-case which held the necklace from my inside pocket and the case which held the cigars out of the satchel, and while I was searching through it for a box of matches I laid the two cases beside me on the seat.

"At that moment the train started, but at the same instant there was a rattle at the lock of the compartment, and a couple of porters lifted and shoved a woman through the door, and hurled her rugs and umbrellas in after her.

"Instinctively I reached for the diamonds. I shoved them quickly into the satchel and, pushing them far down to the bottom of the bag, snapped the spring-lock. Then I put the cigars in the pocket of my coat, but with the thought that now that I had a woman as a traveling companion I would probably not be allowed to enjoy them.

"One of her pieces of luggage had fallen at my feet, and a roll of rugs had landed at my side. I thought if I hid the fact that the lady was not welcome, and at once endeavored to be civil, she might permit me to smoke. So I picked her hand-bag off the floor and asked her where I might place it.

"As I spoke I looked at her for the first time, and saw that she was a most remarkably handsome woman.

"She smiled charmingly and begged me not to disturb myself. Then she arranged her own things about her, and, opening her dressing-bag, took out a gold cigarette-case.

" 'Do you object to smoke?' " she asked.

"I laughed and assured her I had been in great terror lest she might object to it herself.

" 'If you like cigarettes,' she said, 'will you try some of these? They are rolled in Russia especially for my husband, and they are supposed to be unusually good.'

"I thanked her, and took one from her case and I found it so much better than my own that I continued to smoke her cigarettes throughout the rest of the journey. I must say that we got on very well. I judged from the coronet on her cigarette-case, and from her manner, which was quite as well bred as that of any woman I ever met, that she was someone of importance, and though she seemed almost too good-looking to be respectable, I determined that she was some *grande dame* who was so assured of her position that she could afford to be unconventional. At first she read her novel, and then she made some comment on the scenery, and finally we began to discuss the current politics of the Continent. She talked of all the cities of Europe, and seemed to know everyone worth knowing. But she volunteered nothing about herself except that she frequently made use of the expression, 'When my husband was stationed at Vienna,' or 'When my husband was promoted to Rome.' Once she said to me, 'I have often seen you at Monte Carlo. I saw you when you won the pigeon-championship.' I told her that I was not a pigeon-shot, and she gave a little start of surprise. 'Oh, I beg your pardon,' she said; 'I thought you were Morton Hamilton, the English champion.' As a matter of fact, I do look like Hamilton, but I know now that her object was to make me think that she had no idea as to who I really was. She needn't have acted at all, for I certainly had no suspicions of her, and was only too pleased to have so charming a companion.

"The one thing that should have made me suspicious was the fact that at every station she made some trivial

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TRY RICHARD HARDING DAVIS as a writer of mystery stories—

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excuse to get me out of the compartment. She pretended that her maid was traveling back of us in one of the second-class carriages, and kept saying she could not imagine why the woman did not come to look after her, and if the maid did not turn up at the next stop, would I be so very kind as to get out and bring her whatever it was she pretended she wanted.

"I HAD TAKEN MY dressing-case from the rack to get out a novel, and had left it on the seat opposite to mine, and at the end of the compartment farthest from her. And once, when I came back from buying her a cup of chocolate, or from some other fool errand, I found her standing at my end of the compartment with both hands on the dressing-bag. She looked at me without so much as winking an eye and shoved the case carefully into a corner. 'Your bag slipped off onto the floor,' she said. 'If you've got any bottles in it, you had better look and see that they're not broken.'

"And I give you my word, I was such an ass that I did open the case and looked all through it. She must have thought I *was* a Juggins. I get hot all over whenever I remember it. But, in spite of my dulness and her cleverness, she couldn't gain anything by sending me away, because what she wanted was in the hand-bag, and every time she sent me away the hand-bag went with me.

"After the incident of the dressing-case her manner changed. Either in my absence she had had time to look through it, or, when I was examining it for broken bottles, she had seen everything it held.

"From that moment she must have been certain that the cigar-case, in which she knew I carried the diamonds, was in the bag that was fastened to my body, and from that time on she probably was plotting how to get it from me.

"Her anxiety became most apparent. She dropped the great-lady manner, and her charming condescension went with it. She ceased talking, and, when I spoke, answered me irritably or at random. No doubt her mind was entirely occupied with her plan. The end of our journey was drawing rapidly nearer, and her time for action was being cut down with the speed of the express train. Even I, unsuspicious as I was, noticed that something was very wrong with her. I really believe that before we reached Marseilles, if I had not, through my own stupidity, given her the chance she wanted, she might have stuck a knife in me and rolled me out on the rails. But as it was, I only thought that the long journey had tired her. I suggested that it was a very trying trip, and asked her if she would allow me to offer her some of my cognac.

"She thanked me and said, 'No,' and then suddenly her eyes lighted and she exclaimed, 'Yes, thank you, if you will be so kind.'

"My flask was in the hand-bag, and I placed it on my lap and, with my thumb, slipped back the catch. As I keep my tickets and railroad-guide in the bag, I am so constantly opening it that I never bother to lock it, and the fact that it is strapped to me has always been sufficient protection. But I can appreciate now what a satisfaction and what a torment, too, it must have been to that woman when she saw that the bag opened without a key.

"While we were crossing the mountains I had felt rather chilly and had been wearing a light racing-coat. But after the lamps were lighted the compartment became very hot and stuffy, and I found the coat uncomfortable. So I stood up, and, after first slipping the strap of the bag over my head, I placed the bag in the seat next me and pulled off the racing-coat. I don't blame myself for being careless; the bag was still within reach of my hand, and nothing would have happened if at that exact moment the train had not stopped at Arles. It was the combination of my removing the bag and our entering the station at the same instant which gave the Princess Zichy the chance she wanted to rob me.

"I needn't say that she was clever enough to take it. The train ran into the station at full speed and came to a sudden stop. I had just thrown my coat into the rack and had reached out my hand for the bag. In another instant I would have had the strap around my shoulder. But at that moment the Princess threw open the door of the compartment and beckoned wildly at the people on the platform. 'Natalie!' she called, 'Natalie! here I am. Come here! This way!' She turned upon me in the greatest excitement. 'My maid!' she cried. 'She is looking for me. She passed the window without seeing me. Go, please, and bring her back.' She continued pointing out of the door and beckoning me with her other hand. There certainly was something about that woman's tone which made one jump. When she was giving orders you had no chance to think of anything else. So I rushed out on my errand of mercy and then rushed back again to ask what the maid looked like.

" 'In black,' she answered, rising and blocking the door of the compartment. 'All in black, with a bonnet!'

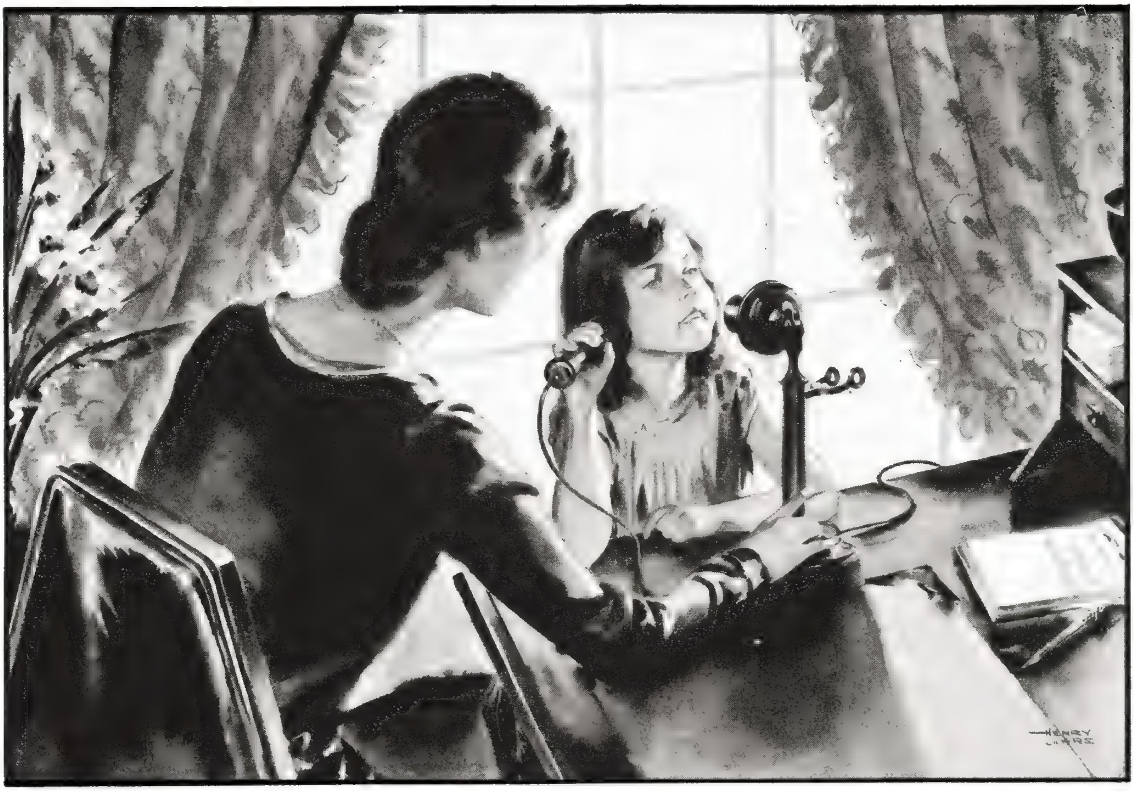
"The train waited three minutes at Arles, and in that time I suppose I must have rushed up to over twenty women and asked, 'Are you Natalie?' The only reason I wasn't punched with an umbrella or handed over to the police was that they probably thought I was crazy.

"When I jumped back into the compartment the Princess was seated where I had left her, but her eyes were burning with happiness. She placed her hand on my arm almost affectionately and said, in a hysterical way, 'You are very kind to me. I am so sorry to have troubled you.'

"I protested that every woman on the platform was dressed in black.

" 'Indeed, I am so sorry,' she said, laughing; and she continued to laugh until she began to breathe so quickly that I thought she was going to faint.

"I can see now that the last part of that journey must have been a terrible half-hour for her. She had the cigar-case safe enough, but she knew that she herself was not safe. She understood if I were to open my bag, even at the last minute, and miss the case, I would know positively that she had taken it. I had placed the diamonds in the bag at the very moment she entered the compartment, and no one but our two selves had occupied it since. She knew that when we reached Marseilles she would either be twenty thousand pounds



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richer than when she left Paris or that she would go to jail. That was the situation as she must have read it, and I don't envy her her state of mind during that last half-hour. It must have been hell.

"I saw that something was wrong, and, in my innocence, I even wondered if possibly my cognac had not been a little too strong. For she suddenly developed into a most brilliant conversationalist and applauded and laughed at everything I said, and fired off questions at me like a machine-gun, so that I had no time to think of anything but of what she was saying. Whenever I stirred, she stopped her chattering and leaned toward me and watched me like a cat over a mouse-hole. I wondered how I could have considered her an agreeable traveling-companion. I thought I would have preferred to be locked in with a lunatic. I don't like to think how she would have acted if I had made a move to examine the bag, but as I had it safely strapped around me again, I did not open it, and I reached Marseilles alive. As we drew into the station, she shook hands with me and grinned at me like a Cheshire cat.

"'I cannot tell you,' she said, 'how much I have to thank you for.' What do you think of that for impudence?

"I offered to put her in a carriage, but she said she must find Natalie, and that she hoped we would meet again at the hotel. So I drove off by myself, wondering who she was, and whether Natalie was not her keeper.

"I had to wait several hours for the train to Nice, and as I wanted to stroll around the city I thought I had better put the diamonds in the safe of the hotel. As soon as I reached my room, I locked the door, placed the hand-bag on the table and opened it. I felt among the things at the top of it, but failed to touch the cigar-case. I shoved my hand in deeper and stirred the things about, but still I did not reach it. A cold wave swept down my spine, and a sort of emptiness came to the pit of my stomach. Then I turned red-hot, and the sweat sprang out all over me. I wet my lips with my tongue and said to myself, 'Don't be an ass. Pull yourself together, pull yourself together. Take the things out, one at a time. It's there, of course it's there. Don't be an ass.'

"SO I PUT A BRAKE on my nerves and began very carefully to pick out the things, one by one, but, after another second, I could not stand it, and I rushed across the room and threw out everything on the bed. But the diamonds were not among them. I pulled the things about and tore them open and shuffled and rearranged and sorted them, but it was no use. The cigar-case was gone. I threw everything in the dressing-case out on the floor, although I knew it was useless to look for it there. I knew that I had put it in the bag. I sat down and tried to think. I remembered I had put it in the satchel at Paris just as that woman had entered the compartment, and I had been alone with her ever since, so it was she who had robbed me. But how? It had never left my shoulder. And then I remembered that it had—that I had taken it off when I had changed my coat and for the few moments that I was searching for Natalie. I remembered that the woman had sent me on that goose-chase, and that at every other station she had tried to get rid of me on some fool errand.

"I gave a roar like a mad bull and I jumped down the stairs, six steps at a time.

"I demanded at the office if a distinguished lady of title, possibly a Russian, had just entered the hotel.

"As I expected, she had not. I sprang into a cab and inquired at two other hotels, and then I saw the folly of trying to catch her without outside help, and I ordered the fellow to gallop to the office of the Chief of Police. I told my story, and the ass in charge asked me to calm myself, and wanted to take notes. I told him this was no time for taking notes, but for doing something. He got wrathy at that, and I demanded to be taken at once to his Chief. The Chief, he said, was very busy and could not see me. So I showed him my silver greyhound. In eleven years I had never used it but once before. I stated, in pretty vigorous language, that I was a Queen's Messenger, and that if the Chief of Police did not see me instantly he would lose his official head. At that the fellow jumped off his high horse and ran with me to his Chief—a colonel in the army, and a very intelligent man.

"I explained that I had been robbed, in a French railway-carriage, of a diamond necklace belonging to the Queen of England, which her Majesty was sending as a present to the Czarina of Russia. I pointed out to him that if he succeeded in capturing the thief he would be made for life and would receive the gratitude of three great powers.

"He wasn't the sort that thinks second thoughts are best. He saw Russian and French decorations sprouting all over his chest, and he hit a bell, and pressed buttons, and yelled out orders like the captain of a penny-steamer in a fog. He sent her description to all city gates, and ordered all cabmen and railway-porters to search all trains leaving Marseilles. He ordered all passengers on outgoing vessels to be examined, and telegraphed the proprietors of every hotel and *pension* to send him a complete list of their guests within an hour. While I was standing there he must have given at least a hundred orders, and sent out enough *commissaires, sergeants de ville, gendarmes*, bicycle-police, and plain-clothes Johnnies to have captured the entire German army. When they had gone he assured me that the woman was as good as arrested already. Indeed, officially, she was arrested; for she had no more chance of escape from Marseilles than from the Château D'If.

"He told me to return to my hotel and possess my soul in peace. Within an hour he assured me he would acquaint me with her arrest.

"I thanked him and complimented him on his energy, and left him. But I didn't share in his confidence. I felt that she was a very clever woman and a match for any and all of us. It was all very well for him to be jubilant. He had not lost the diamonds, and had everything to gain if he found them; while I, even if he did recover the necklace, would only be where I was before I lost them, and if he did not recover it I

(*Continued on page* 117)

1880 GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY YEAR 1930

DAVEY TREE SURGERY

Reproduction from a painting made on the estate of Adolph S. Ochs, Lake George, New York, by Frank Swift Chase

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3¼ million dollar Davey tree-saving business in 1929

Notwithstanding this large volume of business, 75.5% of clients pay less than $100.00 each for the service of internationally famous Davey Tree Surgeons. You might wonder why it is possible to secure this reliable, expert service at so low an average cost.

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JOHN DAVEY
1846-1923
Father of Tree Surgery
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In the second place, nearly all Davey men are motor equipped and can go quickly from one operation to another in the sections where they live. The element of lost time is negligible.

In the next place, Davey Tree Surgeons know what to do. They do not waste any time in guessing or in experimenting. Not only are they real experts in actual performance, but they are specially trained in the all-important matter of diagnosis.

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Tune In Davey Tree Golden Anniversary Radio Hour

Every Sunday afternoon 5 to 6 Eastern time; 4 to 5 Central time; over the Red Network National Broadcasting Company. Featuring the old-time songs that everyone knows and loves. Listen to Chandler Goldthwaite on the Skinner Organ.

USEPPA, the tropical island winter resort, is waiting for you—waiting with relaxation and recreation.

At Useppa you can play golf on one of the sportiest courses in the South. The holes are well trapped and the splendidly conditioned fairways roll from tee to green twixt rows of palms and beautiful stretches of water. And fishing—Useppa Island is right in the heart of the most famous fishing waters on the West Coast. All year round many varieties of fish are plentiful. Late in the winter and in early spring, the giant tarpon puts in his appearance. If you play tennis, courts of championship standard await you in a tropic glade by the water's edge. If you swim, the warm Gulf is tonic and Useppa's stretch of fine beach is ideal for "worshippers of the Sun." Guide boats will take you whither your fancy dictates.

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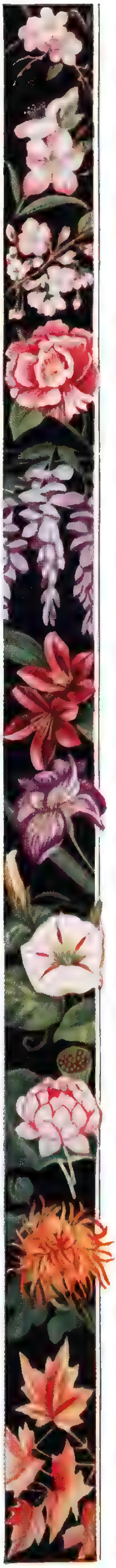
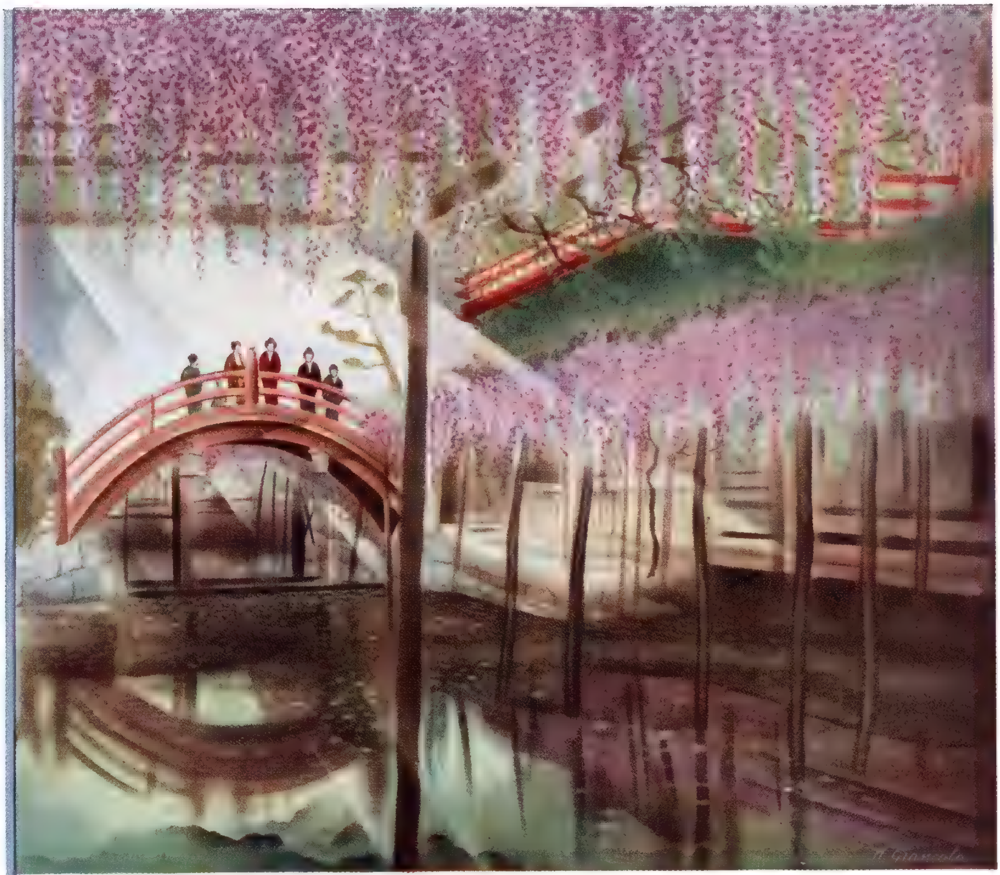


THE ALL YEAR PARADISE



THE cycle of blossoms wafts a year round invitation to Japan. As early as February the plum blossoms' fragrance welcomes you to outdoor jaunts in a land of lakes and glens, of waterfalls and fairy gardens. Peach blossoms perfume the air as you witness the quaint rites of "Shunki Koreisai"—the Spring Festival of the Imperial Ancestors. In April the pines and pagodas rise out of a blanket of pink petals, while the gay holiday spirit of cherry-viewing ceremonies holds sway. Your late spring or summer visit is attended by peonies, wistaria, azaleas, iris, morning glories, lotus, each in turn lending added color to some of the world's most enchanting scenes. In autumn unbelievable chrysanthemums and riotous maple leaves bathe the landscape.

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The wonderlands of Japan, Korea and Manchuria are reached from the United States and Canada by the Nippon Yusen Kaisha, Osaka Shosen Kaisha, the Dollar Steamship Line, the American Mail Line and Canadian Pacific. Full information will be furnished by any of these Lines, the American Express Co., Thos. Cook & Son, any tourist agency, or by the Japan Tourist Bureau. Write for booklet.

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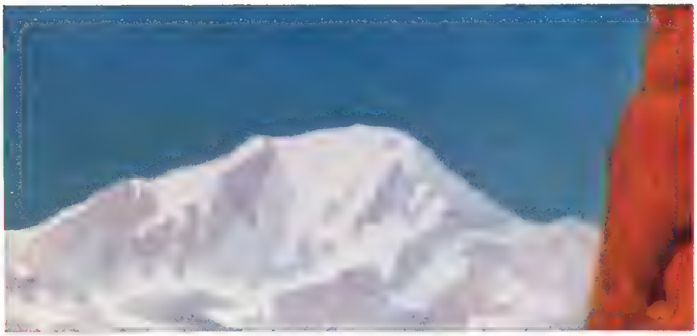

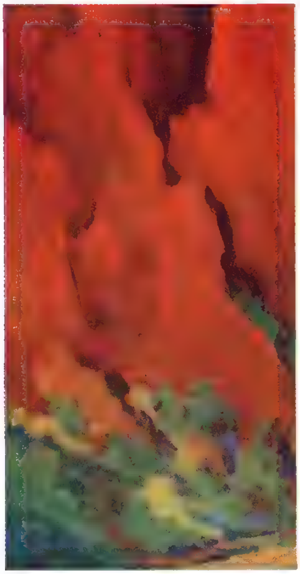

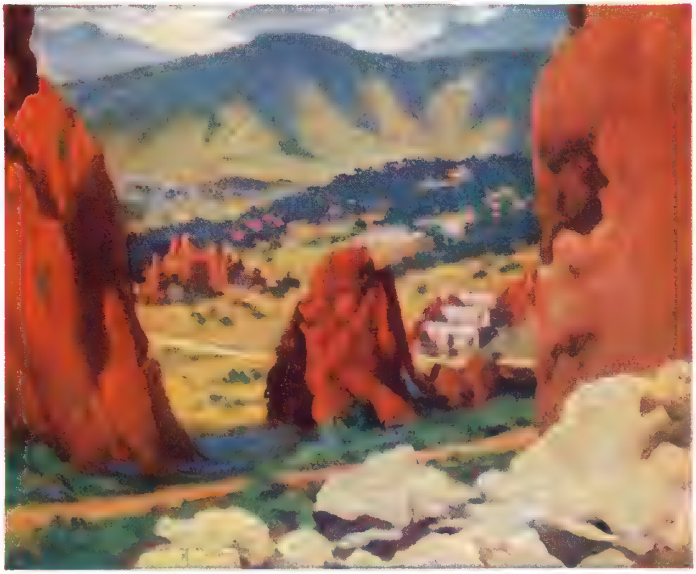

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Colorado is a land of wonders—where prehistoric cliff dwellings and ages old glaciers compete in interest with the six-mile Moffat railroad tunnel and highways 14,000 feet high and the world's largest molybdenum mine and nineteen sugar factories and other marks of the modern age.

A land of natural wonders, with its fantastic rocks; its deep gorges cut thousands of feet through living rock; its curious caverns; its remarkable hot mineral springs; its tremendous beds of coal; its great cliffs of shale storing seventy billion barrels of petroleum against the day of need; its stocks of precious metals, commercial clays and beautiful building stones; its enormous unplanted pastures above the timber line; its glorious wild flowers in astonishing variety.

You can't see all of Colorado in one trip—but you should start seeing it—and start finding out about it—on your next vacation, whenever it comes. Meanwhile, let us tell you accurately all you want to know about us.

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In the Fog

(*Continued from page* 112)

was a ruined man. It was an awful facer for me. I had always prided myself on my record. In eleven years I had never mislaid an envelop nor missed taking the first train. And now I had failed in the most important mission that had ever been entrusted to me. And it wasn't a thing that could be hushed up, either. It was too conspicuous, too spectacular. It was sure to invite the widest notoriety. I saw myself ridiculed all over the Continent, and perhaps dismissed, even suspected of having taken the thing myself.

"I was walking in front of a lighted café, and I felt so sick and miserable that I stopped for a pick-me-up. Then I considered that if I took one drink I would probably, in my present state of mind, not want to stop under twenty, and I decided I had better leave it alone. But my nerves were jumping like a frightened rabbit, and I felt I must have something to quiet them or I would go crazy. I reached for my cigarette-case, but a cigarette seemed hardly adequate, so I put it back again and took out this cigar-case, in which I keep only the strongest and blackest cigars. I opened it and stuck in my fingers, but instead of a cigar, they touched on a thin leather envelop. My heart stood perfectly still. I did not dare to look, but I dug my finger-nails into the leather, and I felt layers of thin paper, then a layer of cotton, and then they scratched on the facets of the Czarina's diamonds!

"I STUMBLED AS THOUGH I had been hit in the face, and fell back into one of the chairs on the sidewalk. I tore off the wrappings and spread out the diamonds on the café-table; I could not believe they were real. I twisted the necklace between my fingers and crushed it between my palms and tossed it up in the air. I believe I almost kissed it. The women in the café stood up on the chairs to see better, and laughed and screamed, and the people crowded so close around me that the waiters had to form a bodyguard. The proprietor thought there was a fight, and called for the police. I was so happy I didn't care. I laughed, too, and gave the proprietor a five-pound note and told him to stand everyone a drink. Then I tumbled into a fiacre and galloped off to my friend the Chief of Police. I felt very sorry for him. He had been so happy at the chance I gave him, and he was sure to be disappointed when he learned I had sent him off on a false alarm.

"But now that I had found the necklace, I did not want him to find the woman. Indeed, I was most anxious that she should get clear away, for, if she were caught, the truth would come out, and I was likely to get a sharp reprimand and sure to be laughed at.

Spring Dawns in Tropic Radiance in Hawaii—

A MORNING in Spring. . . . The snowy linen of breakfast table reflects the shimmering sunlight which dances in through casements never closed. . . . Through the gnarled branches of a great banyan tree a lazy wind whispers with fragrant breath of secrets garnered during a magic night.

Nowhere else on Earth does Spring pour her favors with such lavish hand. . . . For each of Man's senses she gathers delights, distributes them in abundance . . . from luscious pineapples cool with morning dew from great island plantations, to the lilt of lapping waters when the touch of moonlight is on the land and Nature's cadence is caught in the strains of sobbing steel guitars. Each day the miracle is repeated. Each night the magic mystery is renewed.

Go this Spring. Let no worry of heat that comes with the wane of Winter in other lands disturb you. The cool delights of day give way to the cool comforts of night when the warmth of blanket is welcome. Hawaii is only four to six days away from the gateways of the Pacific on liners as proud as any that float. The trip itself is an epoch . . . a symphony of sun and sea and sky

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Dean Gray,
University of Chicago, says:

"VIGOROUS campaigns are needed to help educate parents concerning the merits of different types of magazines and to awaken school authorities and teachers to the urgent need of providing suitable magazines for use in schools and of giving instruction concerning their relative value and use. As pointed out by several writers, the development of a critical attitude among school pupils concerning newspapers and magazines may soon result in a radical improvement in the kinds of magazines found in the home. It is equally essential in the development of intelligent adult readers tomorrow."

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Here is the way!

THE reading taste of adolescents in our schools is today influenced by the appeal of trashy, often lurid, magazines. Can this condition be best met by suppression or by substitution?

The combined opinion sponsoring this appeal to you advocates SUBSTITUTION! The publishers of a number of leading magazines of literary value, under the guidance of CURRENT LITERATURE are uniting in an effort to raise the level of reading interest among our young people.

We invite parents and school authorities to consider the advantages of including contemporary literature—both books and magazines—as part of the required supplementary reading work in school. We have a definite plan for this purpose.

We will gladly send the details of this plan to any parent, teacher, or superintendent on request.

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Mail this announcement to the Principal or Superintendent of Schools in your community. We will gladly mail to any parent, teacher, or superintendent, full details of the plan for raising the standard of leisure reading tastes, through the use of the leading magazines.

CURRENT LITERATURE, COLUMBUS, OHIO

"I could see now how it had happened In my haste to hide the diamonds when the woman was hustled into the carriage. I had shoved the cigars into the satchel and the diamonds into the pocket of my coat. Now that I had the diamonds safe again, it seemed a very natural mistake. But I doubted if the Foreign Office would think so. I was afraid it might not appreciate the beautiful simplicity of my secret hiding-place. So, when I reached the police-station, and found that the woman was still at large, I was more than relieved.

"As I expected, the Chief was extremely chagrined when he learned of my mistake and that there was nothing for him to do. But I was feeling so happy myself that I hated to have anyone else miserable, so I suggested that this attempt to steal the Czarina's necklace might be only the first of a series of such attempts by an unscrupulous gang, and that I might still be in danger.

"I winked at the Chief and the Chief smiled at me, and we went to Nice together in a saloon-car with a guard of twelve carabineers and twelve plain-clothes men, and the Chief and I drank champagne all the way. We marched together up to the hotel where the Russian Ambassador was stopping, closely surrounded by our escort of carabineers, and delivered the necklace with the most profound ceremony. The old Ambassador was immensely impressed, and when we hinted that already I had been made the object of an attack by robbers, he assured us that his Imperial Majesty would not prove ungrateful.

"I WROTE A SWINGING personal letter about the invaluable services of the Chief to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, and they gave him enough Russian and French medals to satisfy even a French soldier. So, though he never caught the woman, he received his just reward."

The Queen's Messenger paused and surveyed the faces of those about him in some embarrassment.

"But the worst of it is," he added, "that the story must have got about; for, while the Princess obtained nothing from me but a cigar-case and five excellent cigars, a few weeks after the coronation the Czar sent me a gold cigar-case with his monogram in diamonds. And I don't know yet whether that was a coincidence, or whether the Czar wanted me to know that he knew I had been carrying the Czarina's diamonds in my pig-skin cigar-case. What do you fellows think?"

(To be concluded)

◆

FROM THE examination paper of an English schoolboy:

The tributaries of the Nile are Juveniles.

Much butter is imported from Denmark because cows have greater enterprise and superior technical education.

Hors-d'œuvres
from the Newest Books

(*Continued from page* 104)

MAN IS THE REASON FOR MAN'S UNHAPPINESS

"The terrors of nature are so trifling compared to the horrors of mankind," said Alex, "that I give them no room in my mind at all."

"What are the horrors of mankind?"

"Well, anything. Anything at all is a horror of mankind. Nature has its cold and its heat, hunger and thirst, it has wild beasts in the forests and reptiles that hide in the grass, but really they all harm man very little. But the horrors of mankind are something different. They are the proud inventions that man makes in order to terrorize himself. Ingenious machines to kill men in uniform and other kinds of machines to kill men in prison. Wonderful locks and traps for man and beast alike. Spies, overbearing officials, unnatural regulations, cruel and revengeful penalties. All invented by man so that his brothers may be tortured. There are some men who are jealous of their brothers even when they have nothing. Yes, all the terrors of nature combined are little combined to the horrors of mankind."

Coronet. MANUEL KOMROFF.

IN AMERICA THE WOMEN ARE MEN

From the end of the street came the notes of a guitar. It was Mastro Genio, and with him were Peppe Liano and Nino Sperlí. Sperlí was a barber, but recently returned from America, who went around all day long dressed in his best clothes, with a fine pair of yellow shoes and a chain of plaited gold. . . . Rosa, naturally bold and animated by the presence of her fiancé, asked a question.

"In America you are pretty well off, Mastro Nino. Can women go there, too?"

"In America the women rule," he replied. "They are the bosses."

"Women rule?" asked Rocco, blank astonishment on his face. "What kind of a country is that?"

"It is this kind of a country. The government isn't like ours. There it is a republic, and where there is a republic the woman rules, so much so that woman in America is called man." . . .

"What is that you say, Sperlí?" asked Passarelli. "How is it possible that woman is called man? Then what do they call a man?"

"You don't believe it? It is as true as God. Ask anyone who has been there. What is the word for man in our language? It is *uomo*. But in America woman is called *uomo* and man is called *menne*. When a man is rich they call him a *riccimenne* and when he is a business man they call him *bissinisimenne*."

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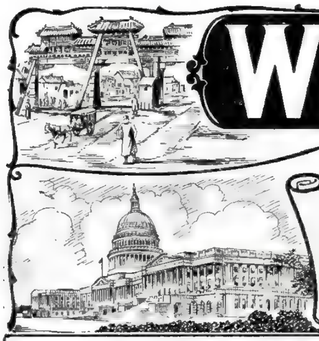

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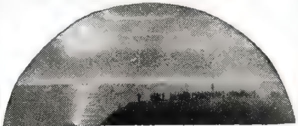

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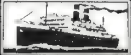

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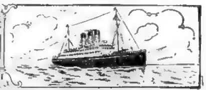

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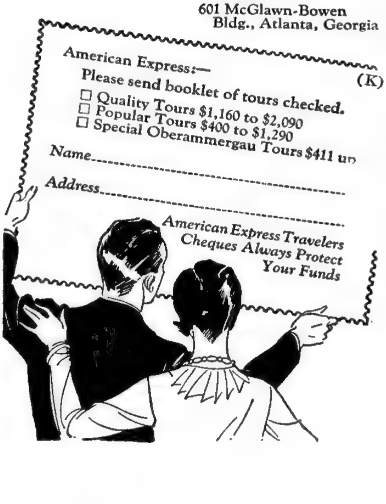

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But the slower moods were made use of to a different purpose. Having taken a young bear-cub from its lair in the mountains they put it every evening on an iron sheet which had been heated, and played music to it of a very slow, noisy, and accentuated rhythm. The bear at once lifted its front paws and stood upright, raising one of its hind paws after the other in order to remove it from the scorching surface, and timing its movements to the sound of the music. When the cub had learned how to make its dance agree with the tune, it had only to hear it played in order to go through this clumsy waltz of its own accord, knowing that should it be slow in this the hot plate would be slipped at once beneath its paws.

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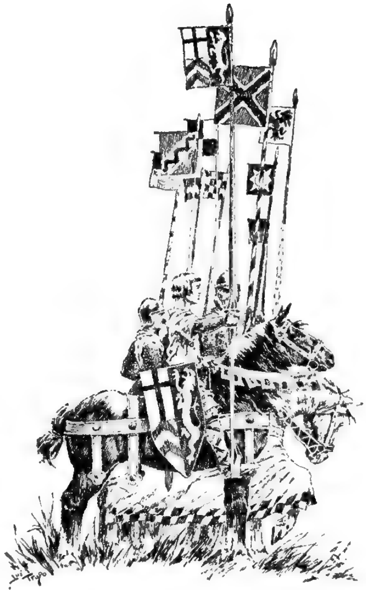

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Through ancient Camelot rises Tintagel, the capital of King Arthur's Land. Only the bones of his castle and St. Julitta's chapel remain, but you can stand where Tristram and Iseult loved and gaze into the days of the ageless heroes.

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Travel News

By ROGER SHAW

Land Cruising in Five Countries

THE "LAND CRUISE" seems an anomaly in terms, for cruising is usually associated with the sea. Yet Mr. Noah Webster justifies it, and the expression gives a broad scope—to wander hither and thither. Land cruises seek out haunts of beauty and interest, just as sea cruises select their ports with due discrimination. With judicious combinations of bus and rail travel, great things may be accomplished ashore by the cruising landlubber whose course is carefully steered for him by those who know.

A TYPICAL ENGLISH land cruise, compressed into six days, may be undertaken under the auspices of the Great Western Railway—this tour covering the Shakespeare country and Oxford in particular. The cruising visitor leaves London on Monday by rail, debarks at Oxford and visits Cheltenham Spa, Gloucester Cathedral, the Forest of Dean, and Chepstow by bus. On Tuesday, the cruiser leaves Chepstow via the Wye Valley, still motoring, for Tintern Abbey, Monmouth, Hereford Cathedral, and Llandrindod Wells. On Wednesday a tour is made of the beautiful Cambrian Coast, including Aberystwyth, and back to Llandrindod Wells. Some of the interesting scenic spots of North Wales are visited on Thursday, and then a move is made to historic Shrewsbury. Friday's schedule includes a drive through the Severn Valley to Worcester Porcelain Works, and a trip to Stratford-on-Avon, the mecca of many a cruising pilgrim; while on Saturday Kenilworth and Warwick Castles, and Oxford are covered. The great University City is thoroughly "done" on the final day of the tour, and the cruisers return to London by train.

Stratford will be of special interest during 1930, for there are two Shakespeare festivals—the Birthday Festival, April 21 to May 24, and the Summer Festival, July 7 to September 13. Seven of the favorite Shakesperian plays will be presented in the poet's native setting during these periods.

WILD SCOTLAND, romantic country of Burns and good Sir Walter Scott, may be thoroughly cruised over in seven days under the direction of the London, Midland, and Scottish Railway. One way, of marked interest, follows an Irish trip. The cruiser crosses from Belfast—by direct boat, or via Larne and Stranraer—to Ayr, and proceeds by rail to Glasgow, Britain's second largest city. Next comes the Burns country: picturesque Oban, and then Inverness—in the extreme northern Highlands—reached by way of the famous Caledonian Canal. Aberdeen is reached on the evening of the fourth day, and then the traveler returns to Glasgow. On the sixth day Edinburgh, the capital, is visited via Loch Lomond and the Trossachs. The seventh day is spent in Edinburgh, and a fast return to London may be made by either the Midland or by the London and Northeastern Road.

A LARGE PART of the German Reich may be visited by a sixteen-day train-bus cruise, starting when the cruiser lands at Bremen—that *plattdeutsch* port. From Bremen the course is laid to Berlin, capital and second largest city in Europe; with its chic cabarets and, in the environs, Potsdam and the Palace of Sans Souci, once the retreat of Old Frederick and his comrade, Voltaire. Then to Dresden and Bayreuth. Here the great Wagner and Mozart Festival will be held during July and August, 1930. The works of these masters will be performed in the Prinzregent and Residenz theaters. Dresden has a Hygiene Exhibit this summer.

Nuremburg, with its old-world architecture and famous German toys, is reached by the tenth day. Who has not read "The Nuremburg Stove"? Stuttgart, *Kraftwagen* center, and Freiburg; then Heidelberg with its famous university and castle, and Wiesbaden. Down the Rhine by boat to Cologne sails the cruiser, and here, on the final day, our passenger sees the great cathedral, after which he entrains for Brussels and Paris.

NORWAY IS Viking-land, far to the north. Here are the midnight sun, the tall pines, the innumerable fjords. A four-day cruise of the Government Railways, by motor, rail, and steamer, leaves Bergen, city of Olav the Peaceful and once a port of the powerful Hanseatic League. The old Mariakirke and Korskirken, and the Cathedral are well worth seeing; and the little Old Theater, first home of the Norwegian drama, boasted Henrik Ibsen as director. Trengereid, Norheimsund, Ulvik, Voss, Stalheim, Gudvangen, Flaam, Myrdal, and finally Oslo, the capital (once Christiania), and the trip is done. From Oslo excellent trains bear one speeding to Stockholm or Copenhagen, and to the Continent.

Oslo became the capital of Norway in 1047, while nearby Viken was a Viking seat long ago; and the Historical Museum contains many relics of these early land cruisers. Also of interest to visitors are the statues of Ibsen and Björnson in front of the National Theater. In the famous Open Air Museum are an eight-hundred-year-old timber church, and the famous Viking bark found at Oseberg. At Holmenkollen, an Oslo suburb, is held annually one of the greatest of winter sports carnivals—in 1930, the last week of February and the first in March.

An event of special interest this July and August is the St. Olav Jubilee at Trondhjem, celebrating the nine hundredth anniversary of the introduction of Christianity into Norway.

BY MEANS of her State Railways, Sweden, the easterly Viking country, may well be visited on an eight-day cruise. From Gothenburg with its Roehss Museum of Art Handicraft, Horticultural Garden, and Art Museum, the cruiser goes to Raettvik, where a boat ride on Lake Siljian waits. Then to Stockholm, the capital city, with its Royal Palace, museums, and theaters; next to Visby, city of ruins and roses. Visby is on the Isle of Gotland, in the Baltic. Ruins of an ancient fortress with four miles of wall and thirty-seven towers are there, and seventeen medieval churches. A Gothic stronghold, it was sacked by the Danes in 1361 and thereafter lost its great prestige. The Snaeckgaerdsbaden Beach, once the rendezvous of the sea-rovers, is now a popular resort place, where Swedish bathing beauties are at their best.

Then back to Stockholm, and via Malmö to Gothenburg—where the satiated cruiser may set forth for either Copenhagen, Berlin, or Hamburg.

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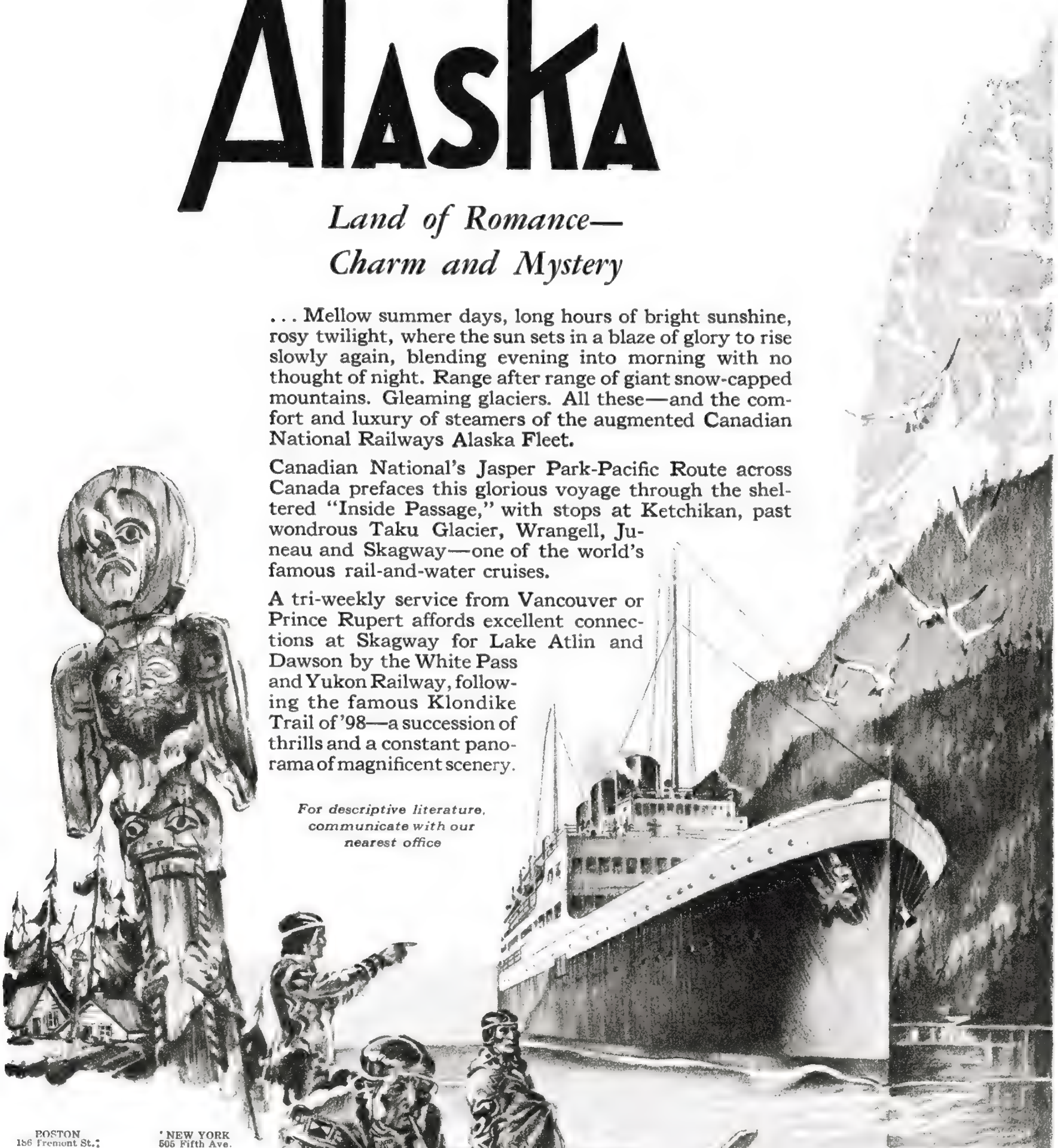

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INVESTMENT TRENDS
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The Financial Storm Subsides

The Outlook for the Future, as Gauged by Experts

Many of those who lost money in the stock market last October and November are beginning to forget their losses, and are filled more with concern for what lies ahead on the highway of business than with vain regrets for the wreckage behind them. Authorities are evidently sincere in their expressions of belief in the basic soundness of American business; and the following brief symposium of carefully-weighed opinions—by men competent to speak—gives evidence of their confidence.

By George E. Roberts, vice-president, in the *Letter* of the National City Bank of New York:

"The essential fact, wherein the present differs from most periods of great stock market declines in the past, is that business itself is healthy and has not been involved in over-expansion with the stock market—which means that an attack of acute indigestion in securities, while it may cause business a severe headache, should not seriously cripple the patient. There is no collapse of commodity prices. There is no inventory problem. There is no breakdown of the banking system. There is no shortage of credit. There are no great business failures, nor are there likely to be. Our great corporations were never in better shape financially, or from the standpoint of manufacturing efficiency and skill of management."

By Leonard Ayres, vice-president, in the *Business Bulletin* of the Cleveland Trust Company:

"A substantial part of the floating supply of stocks has now been transferred from the hands of weak amateur speculators to those of strong professionals. This is a condition which has in the past repeatedly constituted a foundation on which a new advancing market has been based, but such advances have never followed promptly a period of real forced liquidation such as this has been. . . . A period of hesitation, of smaller volume, of false starts and disappointing recessions may be expected to follow the tremendous declines. . . .

"General business has slowed down somewhat, and will probably slow down still more, but the losses in the stock market, gigantic as they are, have not impaired the soundness of our banking system, or decreased the efficiency of our industry, our commerce, or our agriculture. In the main the stock losses are not business losses, and their effect will probably not be nearly so serious for business as their size would lead us to expect."

By the Editor of the *Guaranty Survey,* published by the Guaranty Trust Company of New York:

"It cannot be denied that the break in stock prices has materially altered the outlook for business in the near future. . . . If financial history offers any reliable standard of judgment, the conclusion must be that the unfavorable influences will, for the time being, predominate. Business, which had begun to show signs of recession before the break in the market, will probably be further curtailed as a result of the losses to individuals and business organizations, aggravated by the unwarranted pessimism that always follows an unfavorable turn of major importance in the business or financial situation.

"It is probably true that the number of persons directly affected by the price collapse has been exaggerated and also that, to a considerable extent, those who were holding stocks prior to the break were the same who had previously profited from the rise, so that, in many cases, the losses were merely 'paper losses.' Nevertheless, the sudden disappearance of even paper profits must be expected to have its effect on the psychology and the buying habits of consumers. . . .

"These considerations, however, apply only to the early future. Viewed in the longer perspective, the collapse of the inflated price structure may be correctly regarded as a favorable development from the point of view of general business."

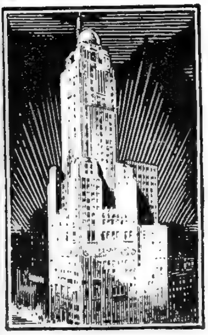
By the Editor of *Business Conditions Weekly,* published by the Alexander Hamilton Institute:

"In 1907 business went through ten months of readjustment, and the stock market declined for nine months. Recovery in the market preceded the recovery in business. The shock to the business world was severe, but recovery was rapid. The points of dissimilarity between 1929 and 1907 all combine to indicate a basically sounder condition of finance and industry at the present time.

"What of the condition of the stock market? It has passed through a decline of unprecedented severity. Readjustment is never completed over-night. . . . The severity of the break has wrought damage which there need be no effort to minimize—damage which will find reflection directly in business activity. But that same severity, accompanied by the drastic reduction in speculative loans, is operating and should operate to restore sound conditions in a relatively short time."

By Irving Fisher, professor of economics at Yale University:

"When the losses in the luxury trades are fully appraised, and when all fears for the future of business prosperity because of the crash in stocks have been discounted, it remains true that throughout there has been a *transfer of wealth* rather than a *destruction of wealth.* The crisis, unlike the 1920 crisis, was not a violent crash of an inflated commodity price level. Business stoppage and unemployment, which always follow a sharp fall in commodity prices, need not result



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Investment Suggestions

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The following list of booklets may be of interest to you. Choose by number the ones you wish to see, fill out the coupon below and we will be glad to have them sent to you without charge, or you can write the Bankers themselves. Please enclose ten cents if the material of more than one company is desired.

19. A VALUABLE AID TO BANKS AND INVESTORS, a booklet describing how the Department of Economics and Survey serves investors by furnishing investment counsel, free, to individuals and institutions. Offered by A. C. Allyn & Company, 67 W. Monroe Street, Chicago, Ill.

4. COMMONWEALTH YEAR BOOK: An illustrated detailed statement of the operations of the Commonwealth Edison Company, of much interest to investors. Offered by Commonwealth Edison Company, 72 W. Adams St., Chicago, Ill.

5. SERVING A NATION, an illustrated booklet telling about the Cities Service Organization and its fiscal agents. Offered by Henry L. Doherty & Company, 60 Wall Street, New York City.

6. HOW TO SELECT SAFE BONDS, a pamphlet outlining some sound investment principles, offered by George M. Forman & Co., 112 West Adams Street, Chicago, Ill.

7. INVESTORS' GUIDE, a detailed statement of sound investments, is offered by Greenebaum Sons Investment Company, La Salle and Madison Streets, Chicago, Ill.

9. SECURITY BONDS, a name applied to 6% real estate bonds which are guaranteed as to principal and interest by the Maryland Casualty Company, a $40,000,000 corporation, are described in an illustrated booklet. Offered by J. A. W. Iglehart & Co., 102 St. Paul St., Baltimore, Md.

10. THE HUDSON RIVER BRIDGE OF TOMORROW. An economic study of the new Hudson River Bridge in its relation to the communities served. Offered by The National City Company, 55 Wall Street, New York.

16. STOCK AND BOND REGISTER. A record showing the important features of each security which is held by investors. Offered by Otis & Company, 216 Superior Street, N. E., Cleveland, Ohio.

14. "INVESTMENTS THAT ENDURE" is the slogan of the Utility Securities Company, 230 So. La Salle St., Chicago, Ill., and is applied to the various securities which are offered by the great public utility interests which the Utility Securities Company serves. Detailed circulars will be mailed upon request.

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from this stock-market smash.

"Our business prosperity tended to promote over-eagerness to buy and to unsound financing of speculative trading in over-priced stocks. The banks at last were frightened by the huge total of brokers' loans representing largely margin accounts. When the banks required brokers to pay their borrowings, the brokers demanded additional margins from their clients. The clients were unable to meet this demand, with the result that the top-heavy credit price structure came tumbling down."

The Aftermath

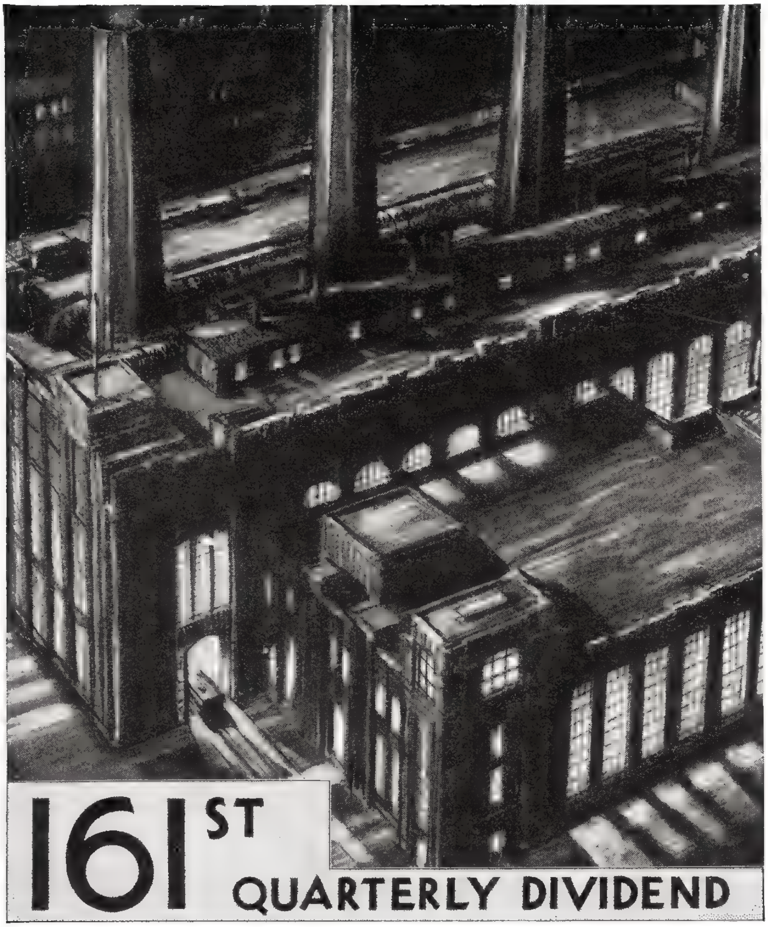
Several years ago a small book by Edgar L. Smith presented a convincing argument for *Common Stocks as Long-Term Investments.* Some investors may well have chuckled when they learned that a financial writer had discovered in theory what they had long known in practice. The little volume of 130 pages was the result of an immense expenditure of time and energy, and roused great interest in the financial world. In it Mr. Smith challenged some of the theories of conservative investment which had been traditional up to the time of its writing (1924). The book came along at the right moment. Stock market history before its appearance, and for some time afterward, proved the author's thesis. Even the three-weeks' cataclysm ending with the 13th of November, when even the best of stocks were wallowing in the depths, will not have smashed the idol utterly.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the recent crisis in Wall Street affected common stocks only.

Bond prices over the past four years (using the Dow, Jones average of forty different bonds) have never been as low as 90 nor as high as 100. If the October-November crash proved one thing it was the extremely fortunate position of the bond-owner. The financial diagnostician who would interpret the market disaster as merely a revaluation of the earning power of money is halted by the evidence that bond yields have remained approximately as before.

More convincing proof that neither yield nor safety of principal was jeopardized by the stock market catastrophe, is found in a simple comparison of the action of preferred stocks with that of common shares in the same companies:

United States Steel Corporation preferred, at its highest point in 1929, sold for $144 per share; on December 27 it sold for $140, a loss of but 4 points. Steel common had meanwhile dropped from $261 to $165. American Can Company preferred reached a "high" of $145 per share before the crash, and it lost only 11 points in those hectic days when the common stock of the same company was dropping from 184 to 86. International Harvester preferred sold as high as $145



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before the crash, and for $140 on December 27. Harvester common had fallen meanwhile from $142 to $77, a loss of almost 50 per cent.

The elements of safety and of general interest return played no part in the financial fireworks of October and November, 1929.

The Money-Making Freight Car

TO THE AVERAGE PERSON a freight car is most uninspiring. It is usually empty, far from home, and apparently neglected. Passenger coaches, and handsome stations which freight cars never enter, seem to represent railroad progress and prosperity. But for every dollar in passenger revenue, in 1928, the lumbering and unlovely looking freight car earned nearly six.

Day-coach passengers paid $795,000,000 in 1921 and only $454,000,000 in 1928. (Our demand for the comfortable parlor car and the time-conserving sleeper resulted in those branches of railroad travel more than holding their own.) The same rate of decrease in day-coach patronage would in ten years render the day-time railroad traveler as extinct as the dodo-bird.

In this emergency the lowly freight car has come forward to assume the rôle of the hero saving the mortgage. Here is a portion of the record: In 1922 the average freight train consisted of 38 cars; by 1928 the number had grown to 48. In 1922 the average speed of freight trains, including stops, was 11.1 miles per hour; in 1928 it was 12.9 miles. Thus we see that in the latter every train on all the important roads included ten more cars than it did six years earlier, and yet traveled faster by 1.8 miles every hour of the day and night. Stating these facts in another way, each freight train carried 424 tons one mile each day in 1922, and 526 tons in 1928.

How many miles per gallon? is the standard of value to many motorists. The corresponding standard of efficiency among railroads is: How many miles per day? We find that each freight car moved 23.5 miles each day in 1922, and 31.3 miles every day in 1928.

The railroad executive evidently has not been asleep on his job. Part of this extraordinary achievement has been due to the employment of better equipment, and part is attributable to the conscious effort to increase human efficiency all along the line. The saving in money in the movement of freight has more than made up for decreased passenger revenue. Each locomotive consumed 186 pounds of fuel in moving 1000 tons of cars and freight in 1922, and only 143 pounds in 1928.

Can the most efficient industrial corporation match such a record? And bear in mind that this is not the achievement of one road; it is the average performance of all the important railroad companies.

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If you live . . . it pays you $10,000, or the face value of your policy, at age 65. This plan establishes a capital quietly accumulated during your productive years to take care of you in your old age.

If you die . . . before age 65 your wife or children or heirs will receive $10,000 cash, plus any accumulations. A monthly income (plus excess interest) may be taken in place of the principal sum. Double the amount of the policy will be paid if death results under conditions covered by the Accidental Death Benefit Provision.

If you become totally and permanently disabled . . . before age 60—you, yourself, will receive $100 per month and will be relieved of paying any further premiums, while such disability lasts. Moreover you will receive the regular annual dividend. In addition to these benefits your policy will be paid in full at your death; or if you are living at age 65 the $10,000 cash will be paid you as described above, and the disability income will continue so long as you remain totally disabled.

NOW . . . *while you are insurable* and can spare the money, let us tell you how small a yearly saving will put this Thrift Policy into action for the comfort of your old age — or for your family's comfort if you die. Just fill in the information called for on the blank below and mail it to us and we will send you full particulars without delay.

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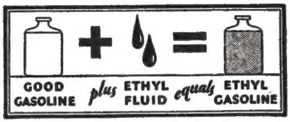
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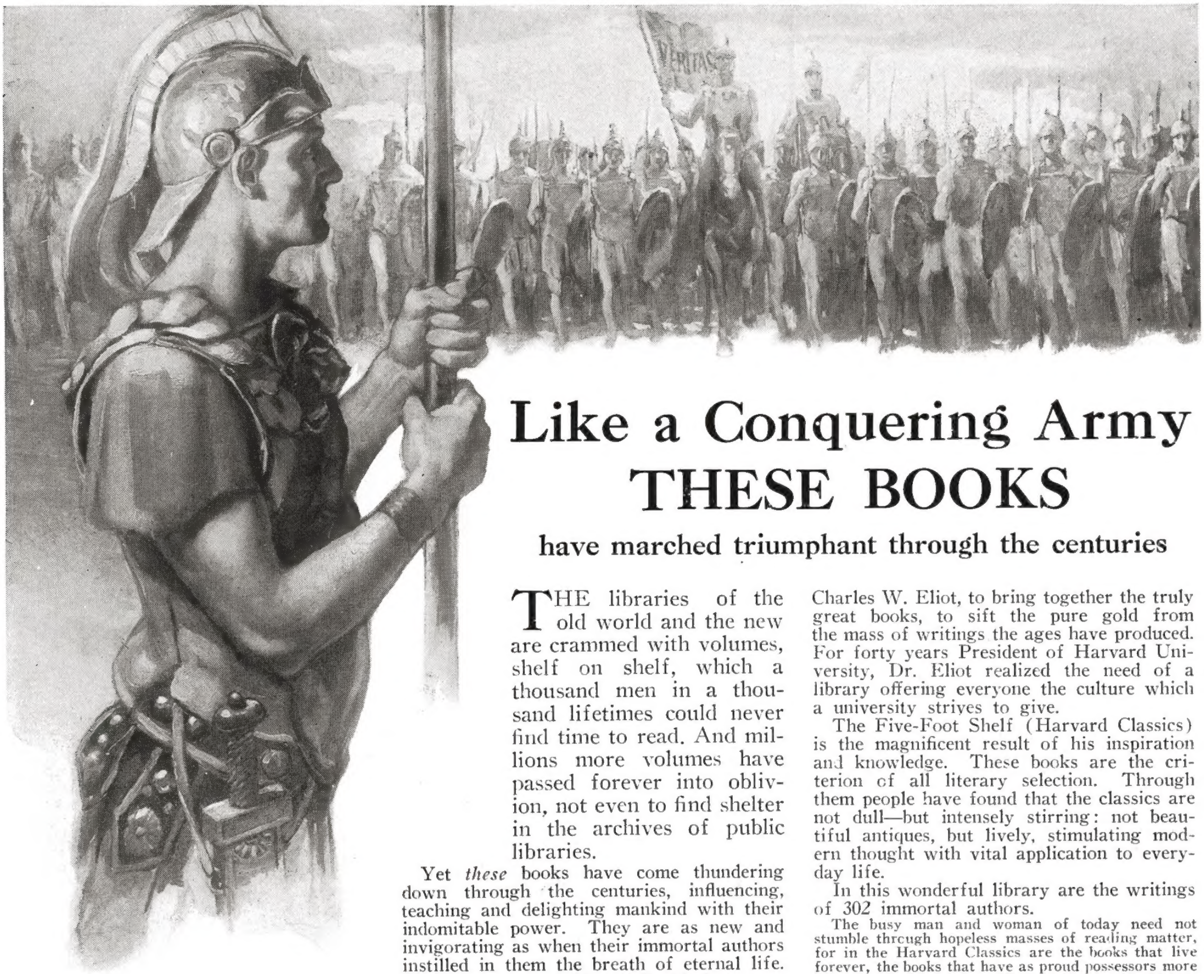

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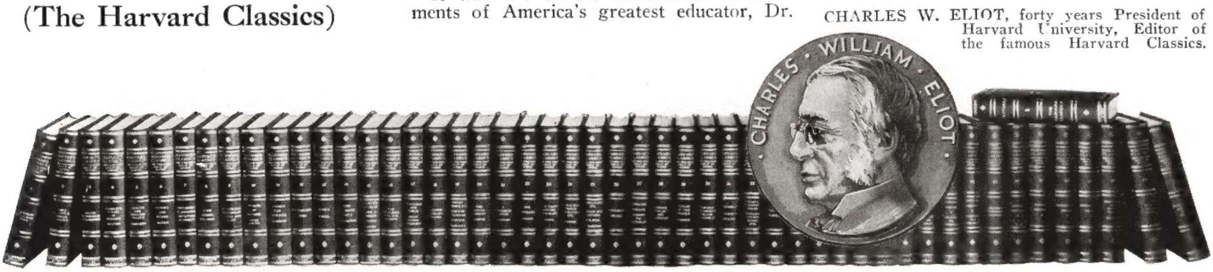

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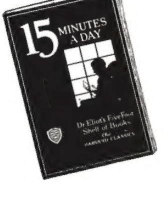

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